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THE SINGER OF THE VINE

(To the Memory of James Stephens)

By Ewart Milne

The goats on the hillside danced and cavorted,
A bumblebee lay on his broad back and giggled,
While Head and Heart took the Body for a walk
And it was all of a summer's day—
Suddenly the toilers everywhere began to play,
The big ships and the little ships raced round the harbour,
Lovers made love with incredible ardour,
While Head and Heart were making small talk,
(They were out to take a walk, take the Body for a walk)
Suddenly in a blue-bright light the world went mad.

A thunderbolt fell with a musical whang,
A blue light rested on the fields along,
Then deep from a hole in the bole at the roots of a tree
There came the sound of a reedy piping,
And Heart listened and saw
In the blue-bright light the shape of Desire,
And Head listened and saw
In the blue-bright light the shape of Desire,
And sweet and high the piping piped and the piper played—
God of passion and pleasure—piped and played
Time out of mind, mind out of time,
And sang on the vine.

He's come back at last, said the goats as they capered,
 He's come back at last, and the bumblebee giggled !
 Then Head looked at Heart, bit his lips in dismay,
 And Heart looked at Head, and looked guiltily away !
 (They were out to take a walk, give the Body a holiday)
 But little *he* cared with the reed at his mouth—
 God of passion and pleasure, bringer of all joy and mirth—
 What Head said to Heart or Heart whispered to Head !
 He knew they must follow wherever *he* led,
 (As all live bodies must follow, and every live heart and head,)
 Follow gladly or reluctantly, on eager feet or slow.

He'd come back at last, the despised, the wronged,
 He'd come back at last, the singer of the vine !
 Now the stars would run, and the sun and moon,
 And all creatures celebrate the new reign of Pan,
 And plants and trees celebrate the creative reign of Pan !
 He'd come riding on a comet's back to claim his sway—
 It happened yesterday, it could happen to-day
 In the Indies or Indonesia, or a land far off as the China Sea,
 But never in a puritan, nor yet in a fomorian country.

NOCTURNE AND LAMENT

By Brian O'Doherty

I

Here in the umbilicated bay at the town's butt
 Where the Esplanade tops relay the eye
 In one swift swallow swoop to the Head's bulk
 I stand, half-soaked in darkness. Rhythmically
 Combed back the Head bump-backed in silhouette
 Juts dark and savage, day makes milder. Away
 Diametrically away, behind the lighted
 Distant promontary, a speckled velvet slieve, the sky
 Though it is after midnight, holds sedimented
 Dregs from the day's glass, mingled with the radiance
 Of half a million souls who sleep beneath it.

Under this composite exhalation, pale green purple
 Under this delicate detained footlight
 The reflecting luminous plate of the sea
 Bodily shifts in a smooth entire movement
 To the shore: Breaks, crashes, washes the fragments
 Of the crescentic rim, then shifts smoothly easily
 Back, withdrawing, renewing the rim, repeating again
 The same, ceaselessly.

In the town behind, the bandstand
 And emblems of gaiety, the string of limp-winged
 Flags, aimlessly, mildly, restless:
 A cat's sudden shriek—
 A torn banana-skin of sound

O God O God teeming sleeping moving half-million
 In my hand I weigh you, clutched composite and hard
 Against one man—his name is not Christ—

This is the agony of loss.

One dark-visaged moon among stars
 One rock on the sand under the Esplanade
 One globule in the water
 One light in the flickering of Dalkey promontary
 One highway among crooked streets in the town behind me

One man, old man, out of his bowels I am formed
 Where another promontary and bay bare naked
 Is crossed grinded torn with stone, flogged lean
 With storm and wind, a wilder sea—sieved through
 For food (fish flashing in slow all-knowing hands
 Bald gaze of stony patience) Bone of his
 Bone, sinew and thigh, a deep red tide of blood
 Holds all, stone flesh and sky, where no limp gaiety
 Hangs down its flags. Bare-toothed water, dark
 Soil deeper. This myth was my reality.

Muffled and swathed
 Telescopically padded
 With puffed cushions of air
 Distant, the clock strikes
 One . . . Gone.

II

Turning to climb the hill
 The dark uneasy spaces of sea now behind
 In the tented darker shadow of the bandstand
 A sliding scuffle of dust. Is it in my eye
 Refracted in a slanting gleam—a light clicked out
 In an anonymous room—an image held
 In the camera's blind bubble of glass? Or a mote
 Magnified to the shape of a man.
 I do not know. He is here there everywhere about
 Within heart's gaze. Coffined in a cocoon, time-spun.
 Two years now.

The beggar's sore at the church gate, the dog run over
 The tumult of birds' wings, all crawling things
 All supplicating mouths, a million particles of dust
 The hammering bullets on a wall, sun-bursts of bloom
 The toss and sway of every leaf, a rag possessed
 The breath of still-born tongues, a wide-thighed road
 I am divided multiplied seed-blown unwinking eyes
 I am I questioning

To the delirium of cities

An answer ?

Asia's spawning millions, chaos of atoms

An answer ?

Wheat in New York harbour and a recurring decimal

An answer ?

A million children dried out like bats in yellow headlines

An answer ?

For the desolation in our hearts

What answer ?

I have no answer, my son
 For you no answer ;
 Only a stone-faced man
 Stretched on a rack of clay
 Rooted where time began.
 That is my answer.

A coin spun
 To the obverse of the world's mould
 A brief-spinning day
 Its fall foretold.
 That is my answer.

Dull recurrent thunder
 Denominating myriad wheels
 The imaged shapes of steam—a scream
 Hand-pulled across the night
 It is alive; the train hurls madly
 Blindly on a course pre-destined
 By a spirit-level.

O world, o world.

I climb the hill. Pass under
 The dew-dripping bridge;
 It is much darker. Passing the cinema
 And a lighted window a silken whisper
 Sucks at the dust, slips
 Sideways wavering into
 The oblong light; a minute
 Whirlpool—dust and a leaf
 A piece of silver paper
 Dance and cavort—then
 In a lid's blink
 Lie down quivering
 Gone.

HERE IN WINTER CHILDREN SEE

(for R. G.)

By Maurice Wigham

Here in winter children see
 Past dark green flames of cypress tree,
 Larch gold cloud with cobalt ways
 When gosling down of darkness falls
 On trees for houses arches halls.
 The children stood in loops of sun.

Tea in the garden, callers came
 Crunched the gravel gave a name,
 Children catch at dignity
 And carry it by tree and flower
 In garden, orchard, leafy tower.
 The children stood in loops of sun.

You must remember, threads lead back
 To sun on stair and harvest stack,
 Motes in the shaft and shadow air
 With flagged complex still yielding soft
 And swallows nesting in the loft.
 The children stood in loops of sun.

Farther back great uncles see
 A part of the same mystery,
 Wet streets reflecting yellow lamps
 The traces re-create and show
 The terraced houses row on row.
 The children stood in loops of sun.

Branches wings, fantastic fare
 Free guarded grounded debonaire,
 Assurance founded on regard
 Enhanced by common liberties
 Of adults summer-clothed like trees.
 The children stood in loops of sun.

THE LAST OF BUCK WHALEY

By Maurice Farley

To die in bed after all the chances
 And all the wagers I've lost and won,
 All the gambling, gambling, gambling,
 All the spending and all the fun . . .
 Dublin town and the nights at Daly's,
 The claret spilt, and a broken stem,
 A heavy purse and a careless challenge,
 The walk I took to Jerusalem.

The sun that shone on the Eastern faces,
 The foreign voices, the long way home . . .
 The time I courted a Spanish lady
 With her hair caught up in a silver comb.

Oh, the gambling, gambling, gambling,
 All the kisses and all the wine!
 Why do I think of the Spanish lady?
 The Spanish lady was never mine.

The horse I rode up the stairs at Daly's,
 The leap from a window to snatch a kiss,
 The street that yawned for a sliding footstep,
 The open carriage, the startled miss . . .

And now I remember the Spanish lady,
 Had eyes as black as the autumn sloes,
 Looking up at my lighted windows,
 Her dress tucked in with a yellow rose.

Oh, the gambling, gambling, gambling,
 All the folly and all the song,
 Would I have spent it to better profit
 Had I known the time wouldn't be so long?
 An empty purse and a broken body—
 A sinner, they say, is a saint gone wrong.

Æ. THE YEARS OF MYSTERY

By Monk Gibbon

I had a complicated character or variety of aptitudes. I wished to paint, to write poetry, to write stories, to go inward to the spirit, to go outward and do something heroic, and I found when one character had emerged a little beyond the others it at once evoked its affinities.

Æ in THE SUNSET OF FANTASY.

I do not think that I will ever try to get literary or artistic fame ; art and literature do not interest me now, only one thing interests and that is Life or Truth. I want to become rather than to know. If I raise myself I raise the rest of the world so much, and if I fail I drag others down also. When this is realised, when we know that in the inner world nothing but a verity convinces, nothing but an actual reality has force, we learn to cut away all that is superfluous, all minor interests . . . I have no other object in life, except this, to spread the science of life which Christ taught and Buddha.

Æ in an early letter to Carrie Rea.

GEORGE RUSSELL left Rathmines School in 1884 and his life for the next six years is in large measure a mystery.

He himself has said nothing which would help to enlighten us, indeed his only comment complicates rather than simplifies the problem. He was not in the habit of dating his letters, and, in any case, allusions in them to external events are rare, indeed almost non-existent. Otherwise his correspondence with Carrie Rea might have furnished some clues. A few years ago I attempted to clear up the mystery, but any results achieved were largely negative in character, that is to say they were only a refutation of premises made by others. Where did Russell go when he left school ? And how was he occupied until he entered the services of Messrs. Pim on August 1st, 1890 ? He appears there in their records as the son of T. Russell, of 67 Grosvenor Square, whither his father had moved in 1886, and he began at a salary of forty pounds per annum. He was then twenty-three years of age. What had he been doing since he left school ? Katherine Tynan is one of those who have unintentionally confused things. In TWENTY-FIVE YEARS she writes, ' I find this entry in my diary for a day in December, 1887. " W. B. Yeats brought a boy, George Russell, with him. Fond of mysticism

and extraordinarily interesting. Another William Blake? ”’ Shortly afterwards she writes, ‘He was then an accountant in Pim’s.’ It is clear from the context that she herself, when writing, did not remember him in any other employment. But actually, as we have seen, he did not join the staff of Pim’s for nearly another three years.

In the MEMOIR John Eglinton writes of this period, immediately following his schooldays, “His father must have been puzzled what to do with him when he began to shew as much interest in literature as in drawing and painting; and was no more satisfied than Blake’s father in a similar case.” We are told by Eglinton that his father obtained for him a promising situation in Guinness’s brewery, but, as Æ informed Van Wyck Brooks in a letter written shortly before his death, ‘I gave it up as my ethical sense was outraged, and then for about six years I lived with an income varying from thirty to sixty pounds and was magnificently happy.’

Here one imagines is the necessary clue provided by Æ himself. But a consultation of the books of Messrs. Guinness proves that he ‘was never on the clerical staff during those years,’ and cannot have been in Guinness’s employment at all ‘unless he was employed as a drayman.’ A further letter from the headquarters of the company confirms this, and states categorically, “Our records do not shew that George William Russell was ever employed by this Company in any capacity.” John Eglinton, consulted on the point, replied, “The brewery in which he served for a time as a clerk was the Phoenix Brewery, not Guinness’s. I made the correction in a list of errata which Macmillan printed for me.”

But the substitution of the Phoenix Brewery is also an error. Eglinton having given me the name and address of his source for this statement, a Mr. Lawrenson, living in Essex, the latter wrote to me that this was a misunderstanding, that he was correcting a statement which he took to apply to Russell’s father. “I told him that somewhere in the early nineties, an old gentleman was pointed out to me as Æ’s *father* in the offices of the Phoenix Brewery which were close to the Guinness building in St. James’s Gate. I never heard of Æ being employed anywhere except in that office of Pim Bros., the large drapery firm in George Street . . .”

In these circumstances it seemed best to make a wider appeal, and a letter duly appeared in the *Irish Times* asking for information. Two replies were forthcoming. Mr. John F. Curtis wrote, "Sir,—It may help Mr. Monk Gibbon if I tell him that it was the late George Russell's (Æ's) brother who was connected with the Phoenix Brewery between the years approximately 1890–1896. He had an office in the Commercial Buildings, Dame Street, Dublin." And Mr. W. H. Jordan, seeing my appeal, replied to me direct :—

30 LAURENCE STREET,
DROGHEDA,
3rd December, 1946.

MONK GIBBON, ESQ.,
Fintragh.

"Æ"

DEAR SIR,

Seeing your letter in the *Irish Times* of 2nd inst., I can assert that George Russell was never in the employment of the Phoenix Brewery, but his father certainly was for a few years.

Both his father, and his brother "Tommy," were employed in Craig Gardner & Co's. (Chartered Accountants), 40/1 Dame Street, Dublin, when I entered that firm's service as a young man in 1885. Thomas Russell, the father, was then advanced in years, and some three or four years afterwards Robert Gardner obtained for him from Charles Brenan, the then proprietor of the Phoenix Brewery, the post of chief accountant in the Brewery Office. Tommy also joined him there soon afterwards, and when Charles Brenan sold the concern to a Limited Company, Tommy became Secretary of the Company and ultimately Manager.

I had only a nodding acquaintance with George Russell, but I knew Tommy intimately, and when his father retired permanently Tommy asked me to take the post of chief accountant in his place and I did so. I am thus certain of the facts which I am pleased to be able to communicate to you.

Faithfully yours,
W. H. JORDAN.

This seems conclusive, though it does not rule out the possibility that Æ's father might have got him taken into the firm for a few weeks on trial. Since then Mr. Van Wyck Brooks has sent me from America a copy of the letter which gave rise originally to all this conjecture. It was written from Donegal on 29/5/'34, and in it Æ congratulates Van Wyck Brooks on the book of essays which he had sent him :—

"I marked sentence after sentence. . . . I could go on for pages sending back your wisdom to yourself but that would be the cheapest return for your gift. I feel one thing especially to be good and true and wise. You suggest

to the artist or poet voluntary poverty. We are all poor in Ireland and it has done none of us any harm. The happiest years of my life were when I was young and lived on less than fifty pounds a year and could afford no luxuries. But we sat up to all hours talking about everything in heaven or earth. And we brooded and brooded on what we read. I live now very economically on my fixed income of about £100 a year, but am I unhappy? Good God, no. I feel like Swedenborg's angels who were continually advancing to the springtime of their youth. That is inside I feel like that. Outside, alas, I cannot climb hills the way I used to. But I feel sure you are right. So many artists want a motor car, a house, to give parties, etc., that they sell their genius for cash. They should all take the vow of poverty, that is an inside vow. It does not mean that if somebody leaves them 100,000 dollars in a will that they refuse it, but that they stand ready at any time to desert prosperity if it conflicts with the spirit. I started doing this when my father found me a well paid job. I gave it up as my ethical sense was outraged and then for about six years I lived with an income varying from thirty to sixty pounds and was magnificently happy. Yeats had long years of poverty and never sold his talent. Stephens was living on one pound a week when he wrote *THE CHARWOMAN'S DAUGHTER* and *THE CROCK OF GOLD* and the early poems. Stephen Mackenna, the translator of Plotinus, the greatest piece of prose written in our time I think, lived at the end of his life in a cottage on two pounds a week and refused a good income rather than undertake work he did not like. If you do not know his translation of Plotinus, try and borrow the first volume published by the Medici Society and read the tractate on Beauty and you will get the thrill of great style. All my Irish Literary friends are poor except Lord Dunsany who was born with an income, and Yeats who in his old age became famous so that people had to buy his books as a duty. It is quite easy to be poor. The needs of life I think Emerson says are much fewer than most people suppose."

It will be seen that Æ does not say that he ever even accepted the post, though the expression 'gave it up' rather than 'refused it' seems to imply that he did take it for a time.* That it was in a brewery is suggested by two things, the fact that both his father and brother worked in one, and the fact that his ethical sense was outraged. A brewery or a distillery is the most likely employment to have caused his conscience pangs; but in 1884 when he left school, his father, as we see from Mr. Jordan's letter, was not yet employed by the Phoenix Company. It is true that when Æ speaks of 'about six years' of modest competency which

*As an example of how vague Æ could be in factual references one might quote his letter to Pryse, given in a MEMOIR OF Æ on p. 40. "Painting is the only thing I have any real delight in doing. Nature intended me to be a painter. I was never taught. I went into an office and wrote poetry. Then because I wrote good poetry I was taken from the office and sent out over the country to organise farmers." If this was our only evidence, one might suppose that he had never been near an art school, though of course Pryse and all readers of *HAIL AND FAREWELL* were aware that he had been at one time a star pupil.

followed, it suggests either the whole period 1884-1890, or his time with Pim's, for he was with them from August 1st, 1890, to November 3rd, 1897, and the figure given is roughly the amount of his salary with them. But it seems an exaggeration to say that he was magnificently happy then, in view of some of his own writings at that time, and of John Eglinton's allusion to 'rankling memories of various humiliations.'

If we take it as applying to the earlier period we are forced back on certain alternative conjectures. We have seen that Russell, before ever he left Rathmines School, had resumed Evening Classes at the Art School. The dates given me by the present Director are as follows:—

- Session 1883-84 Attended as an Evening Student from October to June.
 „ 1884-85 Attended as an Evening Student from October to July. (His address then was 67, Grosvenor Square).
 „ 1885-86 Attended as an Evening Student from October to July.
 „ 1886-87 Attended as an Evening Student in October.

Passed the following Examinations in 1884:—

Free-hand Drawing	...	Passed.
Geometry	...	Excellent.
Perspective	...	Passed.
Model Drawing	...	Passed.

From these dates we must draw what inference we can. They make it clear that Russell was in Dublin from 1884-1887. He may have been in some employment, or in a number of different employments during the time, but it is of course possible that he was giving his whole attention to art. What happened after he had given up the classes in the Art School in October, 1887, must still remain conjecture. According to Yeats, he abandoned them for personal reasons. He feared that the emotional element in art was weakening his will. And it was just at this moment that Dublin was becoming aware of Theosophy. This could have been the moment, too, when his father tried to obtain for him a post, and he may have taken it and speedily given it up, or never have taken it at all. What suggests that he was earning, is his statement that he lived with an income varying from thirty to sixty pounds. Where would he have got such an income unless

he had been employed? Had he an allowance from his father? The dates which Carrie Rea suggests for some of the early letters point to his being still in Dublin and living with his father in Grosvenor Square in 1888. When I come to discuss another kindred problem—whether he ever met Madame Blavatsky—we shall see that the slender evidence available points to his having been able to visit Theosophical Headquarters in London, ‘frequently’ at one time, and this could hardly have been after 1890.

Piecing together the various threads of evidence, this much transpires. Before he had ever left school his thoughts had reverted to a training in art. We are told that it was at the Art School that he first met Yeats, and we know that the meeting with Yeats was crucial to his whole after development. Sixteen is the age generally given for when he met Yeats. But the latter had already seen him before their encounter in the Art School. We have Yeats’s own word for this. When reviewing *SONG AND ITS FOUNTAINS* for *The Spectator* in April, 1932, he wrote:—“Towards the end of my Dublin schooldays an elderly servant of my mother’s took an interest in a schoolboy who passed our windows daily. None of us knew his name, nor did he interest my sisters or myself or seem in any way unusual, but our servant called him ‘the strayed angel.’ Then I went to the Art schools and found him, turning his study of the nude into a St. John in the Desert, with some reminiscence of da Vinci obstructing his sight.” Both, then, were still schoolboys when Yeats first saw Russell, though it is possible that the former’s memory was a little at fault in making Russell precede him to the Art School, since Yeats was by two years the elder. Russell’s resumption of the classes in 1883 certainly suggests that he had thoughts of becoming a painter, and throws some light on why—though he had done so creditably in his last year at school—he had no idea of trying for a sizarship and going to the university. He may have been still short of such a standard in Dr. Benson’s opinion; or there may even have been financial reasons which made it imperative that he should start earning as soon as possible. But his family obviously encouraged his artistic aspirations at this date, or at least tolerated them; otherwise they would hardly have sanctioned work in the Art School at the very time when he was still occupied with his normal school routine. And once at

the Art School and the friend of Yeats, any urge he may have felt towards a University career would have received little encouragement from his friend, who had set his own heart resolutely against the thought of an academic training.

I am aware that in positing the query as to Æ's whereabouts in the years in question I am giving a magnificent opportunity to those people who are greedy of the occult and the esoteric. In a few years we may hear that Æ spent the time in a remote part of Tibet, and that he returned from the Himalayas no longer a *chela*, but an adept himself, under vows of secrecy never on any account to refer to this period of apprenticeship. Something of the sort has happened in the case of Madame Blavatsky. Sinnett writes, "She had originally told us, when she first made our acquaintance at Allahabad, that she had spent three years with the Masters in Tibet. . . . I had good reason to feel sure that she really had been at some time with the Masters in Tibet, but eventually her three years came to be condensed into about eleven months." Actually Sinnett was dealing gently with the lady, whose claim was for a still longer period than three years. In the *Journal 'Light'*, August 9th, 1884, she wrote, "I have lived in different periods in Little Tibet and Great Tibet, and these combined periods form more than seven years."

If we have no clue as to how Russell's days were spent at this time, we at least get a few glimpses of him as an evening student at the Art School. Professor Bodkin draws attention to Æ's evidence before the Royal Commission years later when the whole question of the teaching at the Art School was being gone into. That teaching, in Æ's opinion, was sadly inadequate and ineffective. This is borne out by Yeats in his *REVERIES OVER CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH*, where he writes, "we had no scholarship, no critical knowledge of the history of painting and no settled standards." According to Bodkin, Russell had secured admission to the School on the strength of a small drawing, and it was there that he first began to work in oils. There are several vivid sketches of life in the Art School in *REVERIES*, including the incident of the pleasant-faced girl to whom the students used such outrageous language, mystifying Yeats, until someone explained to him that she was stone deaf. Yeats no longer went to the High School in Harcourt Street, and the family had moved from Howth to Rathgar. It was now that they must have first

noticed Russell flying by. Of the Art School, Yeats writes, "Then there was a wild young man who would come to school with a daisy-chain hung round his neck ; and George Russel (*sic*) "Æ" the poet and mystic. He did not paint the model as we tried to, for some other image rose always before his eyes (a St. John in the Desert, I remember) and already he spoke to us of his visions. His conversation, so lucid and vehement to-day, was all but incomprehensible, though now and again some phrase would be understood and repeated."

I supplemented the rather meagre details given in this chapter of Yeats's autobiography by a talk with the late Miss Lily Yeats, taking pencil notes of her answers. She agrees that it must have been about 1884 that her brother made Russell's acquaintance at the Art School. In 1885 the Yeats family, she told me, were living in Ashfield Terrace, since renamed she believed. Before that they had been living out at Howth, and in 1887 they went to live in London. She saw Russell frequently during the years 1884-87. She remembered him as full of vitality and enthusiasm, "his great overcoat flying open." Miss Yeats did not remember what he was doing at this time, nor had she any recollection of his ever visiting them in London after they went to live there. W.B. brought him frequently to their house in Dublin, and there were endless discussions of strange subjects, for example, what cosmic sounds made the mushrooms grow. The mushroom theme appears in one of Æ's Ely Place frescoes. Russell would come in the evening, and when the maid and all the family had gone to bed, he and W.B. would go into the kitchen, put the inkpot which they had been using and the lamp down on the top of the kitchen range, and continue their debating. On Sundays they might go out to Katherine Tynan at Templeogue. (There is a delightful picture in *TWENTY-FIVE YEARS* of old Tynan, the farmer, very proud of his poet daughter, welcoming her literary friends to the house, and of Willie Yeats after a weekend visit driving back into Dublin on Monday morning on one of the milk-carts beside the driver. Russell may have done the same on other occasions after his first visit to the home with Yeats.)

Amongst other things Miss Yeats told me that Russell's nickname in the Yeats' family was 'The Strayed Angel,' but that Rose, their maid, got this wrong and understood him to be 'The Street Angel,' i.e. a devil at home, from the saying 'Road angel,

home devil.' This is a less picturesque version of the story as given by Yeats. One would like to think that the maid had instinctively recognised some quality in this youth who was later to choose as his pen-name the word 'Æon,' one of the proud, rebellious angels of Gnostic myth. If she did, it shewed something approaching clairvoyance. But Yeats was dependent upon Lily's memory for many of the anecdotes which he has given in *REVERIES* and it is likely that her version is correct, and that he confused it when he retold it.

It will be said "Surely Æ's correspondence must throw some light upon his activities during these six missing years?" The answer is "Little or none." The earliest letter from Yeats to Æ is given by Seumas O'Sullivan as 1889, and, of those which survived from Æ to his friend, the first cannot have been written much before 1896. There is the bulky correspondence with Carrie Rea which its curator, Mr. Patterson, secured for Armagh Museum, where it can now be consulted. Unfortunately, though many of the letters are headed by an address, hardly any of them have a date. When I wrote to Mrs. Coates a year or two before her death, asking about the missing years, she replied (April 16th, 1945), "I have no idea how he spent his time before he went to Pim's. I was in Armagh and he was in Dublin. Perhaps he was just studying Art and Literature."

He was certainly studying theosophy, for, although what I take to be the first letter in the series (heavily illustrated and with various allusions to his own and Yeats's prentice efforts), makes no allusion to theosophy by name, slightly later letters of enormous length (there is one of thirty-five pages), are devoted almost wholly to expounding its doctrines. There are occasional brief references to people, Lippmann, Katherine Tynan, Yeats, "auntie," but hardly any to events in his own life. Once, in one of the later letters (judging from its handwriting and from other internal evidence), he does make a reference to a nearly twelve-hour working day and its disadvantages, so that when it was written he must clearly have been either in Pim's or with some other business firm. On one letter Mrs. Coates has pencilled, "written in 1887," and in it he refers to his intuitions as to the origin of language and to the fact that Johnston has insisted that he should write "an essay for the great organ of the esoteric religions, 'The Theosophist,' upon the subject." Another letter

is actually dated 'October 31st, 1887.' It is a long exposition of his views. "Christ saw that humanity was sliding downwards into a mere physical existence, he gave them laws to guide such a life and the highest ideal for it. Practically speaking there is nothing of what I now call religion in the Bible at all. I define religion as that science which shews us our place and destinies in the universe and how to act so as to arrive safely at that end."

Nevertheless, now, or a little earlier, he was still a church-goer, for I find him writing in another letter to Carrie Rea, "It is a detestable thing to see children growing up less beautiful than they were. There was a little girl in church whom I used to worship every Sunday from a distance imagining her in all sorts of beautiful surroundings, clothed in a long robe of palest yellow silk, with hair of tawny gold wreathed with flowers of darkest crimson flowing over her shoulders and looking out from a sun-flushed face with saintly blue eyes. Now she comes into church and after praying that she may get some good from the service she immediately begins to giggle and criticise her neighbour's appearance. . . ."

Æ's first contribution to theosophic literature is a joint article with Charles Johnston on 'The Speech of the Gods' in *The Theosophist* for December, 1887. Johnston had apparently re-written it because he considered that Russell's original presentation of his subject was too chaotic. It is signed—

C. Johnston, F.T.S.

Geo. Russell.

The Irish Theosophist (a later publication) would not be founded until 1892, nor would Æ go to live at Ely Place until about that date. But from 1887 onwards he was clearly in close touch with theosophic circles, whatever other occupation he may have had at the same time. This brings me to the interesting problem of whether he ever met Madame Blavatsky or not.

I remember dining with Yeats when he was living in Merrion Square. I forget what other guest was present, but, after dinner we were joined by Æ, Walter Starkie, Lennox Robinson, and, I think, Professor Dodds. In course of the evening the talk turned on visions, and Æ and Yeats referred to a vision, which appeared to have been shared by them in the course of mental concentration, of St. John in the desert. Presently Madame Blavatsky's name was mentioned and a good deal of scorn was poured on her

by the others present, Lennox Robinson reminding us of the incident in India where a cup was dug for her at a certain point where she herself or an amanuensis could previously have buried it. Madame, it seemed, had been given her coup de grâce by the Society for Psychical Research and the matter was ended. I do not remember Æ contributing in any way to this debate. He sat silent throughout it, puffing quietly at his pipe. Nor do I remember Yeats attempting in any way to defend the lady. I knew nothing about her myself, she was merely a name to me then, and I remained silent for that excellent reason. But, when the evening ended, I left with Æ and walked back with him up Merrion Row, through Ely Place, along the Green and as far as Harcourt Street. In the course of our walk Madame Blavatsky's name was mentioned and he said defiantly, as though he had been nettled by those very attacks to which he had listened in silence, "They may say what they like of her but I have seen her do some wonderful things." I am practically certain of his words, which were noted down only a short time afterwards in my journal.

When, however, I asked Norman, his lifelong friend from 1893 onwards, whether Æ had ever mentioned to him meeting Blavatsky his reply was "No." He believed that if he had met her he would at some time or other have referred to it. I have tried hard to verify whether he met her or not. Seumas O'Sullivan does not know, but tells me that Æ had a signed photograph of the lady in his room. I have also been shown his membership card of The Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society. According to Bechofer Roberts this section was founded at a time when H.P.B.'s relations with both Sinnett and Olcott might have been more friendly, and when she had severed her connection with THE THEOSOPHIST and transferred her interest to the new paper LUCIFER.

"This was not her only revolt against Olcott. She informed him that 'fourteen of the best members' of the London branch of the Society had formed a new esoteric body to be called The Blavatsky Lodge, over which she was personally to preside. . . . The Colonel hurried to England, argued with her but capitulated; and a notice, signed by him, appeared in Lucifer, stating that an Esoteric Section of the Society was to be founded under the sole direction of H.P.B. for the 'deeper study of esoteric philosophy,' and that this body would have no active connection with the main Society. It was clear that the members of the new group would become H.P.B. janissaries, for their secret pledges in-

cluded an oath 'to obey without cavil or delay, the orders of the Head of the Esoteric Section.' In vain Sinnett forbade the members of his London Lodge to join the new group . . . H.P.B. could now retire, surrounded like a Master with her pupils, from the buffets of the world into the refined if hardly Himalayan fastnesses of Notting Hill."

The section had been founded about the year 1887 and Russell's card is numbered 939, and is dated Dec. 9: 90. It is a torn-off counterfoil and declares that "Brother George Wm. Russell having signed the pledge is hereby admitted to the Section as a Probationer." The card is signed in a firm compact handwriting "H. P. Blavatsky." Madame Blavatsky died on May 8th, 1891, five months later, so that the probationer cannot have enjoyed much, if any, of the privilege of her personal instruction. Nor is he at all likely to have received this card from her own hands, for he was already with Messrs. Pim and in the throes of a particularly busy bout of work. It is quite probable that he joined the section because he felt the need of support and further enlightenment at a time when his own life was not particularly happy.

The card throws no light on whether he met H.P.B. or not. But in the Canadian Theosophist for August 15th, 1935, after Æ's death, James Morgan Pryse is found writing

"I first became acquainted with Russell during his frequent visits to the London Headquarters of the T.S. At one time, when on a walking tour in Wales, while examining Druidic ruins on the Isle of Anglesey, I noticed a small steamer, the Shamrock, that was about to cross over to Dublin. I took passage on it and spent the rest of my vacation with Russell and the other members of the Dublin Lodge. In 1895, by advice of Mr. Judge and Dr. Keightley, I shipped the original H.P.B. Press, which belonged to Dr. Keightley, to Dublin, joined the Lodge there, and for over a year helped Russell and the others to get out THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST."

Memory can be inaccurate after forty years but Pryse is hardly likely to have dreamt that he met Russell first at the London Headquarters of the Society. And, if he did meet him, it is much more likely that it was before August 1st, 1890, when he joined Messrs. Pim, than after, though this is possible. I consulted several of Æ's friends. John Eglinton wrote to me, "As to your queries about Æ: I rather think he did meet Madame B. I have a vaguish recollection of Weekes telling me

of Russell's awestruck approach to her, while he (C.W.) was not the least daunted and exchanged jokes with her, getting on with her much better. Weekes did not seem very well when I last heard from him, and I doubt if he would recall exactly what happened. I am quite sure Russell had been over in London before I began to know him about 1890." This is fairly definite. And when I wrote to Mr. Weekes in London a few weeks before his death, he dictated an answer to his wife in the course of which he says, "H. Petrovna Blavatsky? I feel sure that Malcolm Magee (*sic*) was at more than one Blavatsky 'evening' whether in the Avenue Road house or some other. Headquarters really were where H.P.B. was. I have a vague notion that Mme. B. bestowed photographs on all of us. Mine, if any, has not survived." In reply to a further letter of mine Mrs. Weekes wrote, "Unfortunately my husband is again slightly hors de combat and I have taken on myself to answer your query of August 1st rather than keep you waiting. Your question runs, 'Can I take it with *almost* certainty that Æ did meet her (H.P.B.)?' My husband has given it much and careful thought and has come to the conclusion that it is *almost* certain that Æ did join the evening gatherings but he is not *absolutely* certain."

A long and interesting letter from Mr. Malcolm Magee in Canada inclined to the opposite opinion. "I think I can say with certainty that Æ never went to London up to the time of my leaving Dublin in 1894, and so cannot have seen H. P. Blavatsky who died in 1890 or '91. During one of my holiday visits to Dublin I remember Æ speaking of the miasmic (spiritual) atmosphere of London, which he must have therefore visited previously to the time of his appearance at Albert Hall but this would be long after H.P.B.'s death." Malcolm Magee believed that he met Russell first "as late as 1888 or 1889. At all events it would be about the time that he joined the T.S. Lodge." Russell could therefore have gone before he met Magee, or, at some later date, but unknown to him.

In view of Æ's remarks in the letter to Carrie Rea, "I who know a good deal about H.P. believe her to be absolutely incapable of deceit"; in view of the testimony of Pryse, John Eglington and Charles Weekes; and in view of my own recollection of the remark, "They may say what they like about her but I have seen her do some wonderful things," it seems fairly

certain that Russell did meet H.P.B. on some occasion or occasions, and that he was duly impressed by her. But like so much else that belongs to this period it must remain surmise. It seems strange to me now that though I and many others believed so firmly in Æ's greatness, none of us seem to have ever made any attempt to secure any biographical details from him. I think the explanation is partly that he had made us share his own conviction that external events are often of little importance and that what really matters is the adventure of the soul.

BLAKE'S JOY OF THE YEW

"a voice heard from a sepulchre."

By Elizabeth O'Higgins

THE serenity of Blake's old age would have been impossible if he did not believe he had kept faith with his fathers.

He might well have chosen to write in their language. When I tried translating into Irish some of his songs, I became convinced they had already been composed in Irish by Blake himself. Among those songs there is one, *Infant Joy*, the Irish origin of which can be indicated to readers who do not know Irish.

Blake's English version follows, along with my attempt to restore the Irish original:—

I have no name	Gan ghairm me
I am but two days old.—	Gan agham ach dha lae.—
What shall I call thee?	Ga ni ghairfead thu?
I happy am	Gle-ghair gleidhim
Joy is my name,—	Gair ghle mo ghairm,—
Sweet joy befall thee!	Go ria gair ghle thu!

Pretty joy !	Gean gairidhe !
Sweet joy but two days old,	Gle-ghair gan ach dha laoi,
Sweet joy I call thee ;	Gair ghaol goirim thu ;
Thou dost smile.	Goirir gle-ghair.
I sing the while	Gleim an laoi-ghair
Sweet joy befall thee.	Go ria gair ghaol thu.

The Irish version is in the metre, and conveys the meaning, of Blake's English song. The first two lines of each stanza, which rhyme in Irish, do not rhyme in English : one would expect this kind of difference if Blake was translating from Irish. Another, but trivial, difference is that the fourth line has four syllables in both Irish stanzas ; in English, it has four syllables in the first, three in the second stanza.

The more explicit theme of the Irish poem is as follows :— The poet visits Joy, a babe " two days old." The phrase should not be taken literally, for in Irish " two days " is sometimes used of an indefinite period. He listens to the babe gurgling, and presently joins in, with a friendly imitation of her speech. Besides the international *g*, *r*, and *l*, of baby language, Joy can pronounce *m*, *n*, *h*, and *ch* (as in *loch*). The poet's use of vowels is freer than Joy's, but he introduces only one new consonant (the *d* in the third line is changed by assimilation). Knowing that the Birch alphabet was a group of symbols representing social activities, he reflects that Joy with her small alphabet is an appropriate image of contemporary Ireland. He asks how infant Erin can be uplifted, and compares the education of the Irish clan with the conditioning to which the babe is subjected, and which is described in *Tiriel* :—

" The father ready stands to form

The infant head

And scourges off all youthful fancies from the new-born man."

These lines are recalled by the illustration of *Infant Joy*. A mother with a babe on her knees is enclosed in a flower with two flaming petals. In front of the mother stands an angel with ambiguous wings and hands posed ready to mould the infant head. The words of the English song exemplify the opposite kind

of upbringing. The babe's individual expression is followed with loving attention: the part of the teacher is to "sing the while."

The question immediately presents itself: how did the poet express his varied thought in a song so brief and so limited? The answer is, first, that his song is based on an alphabet of tree symbols, that the trees could be introduced under many disguises, and secondly, that different meanings of the sounds used by the poet could be brought to the foreground of the percipient's mind by changes in his mental approach. The stringent conditions under which Irish literature developed begot strange and subtle devices. It was an instrument of life: the poet's glory was to train men. The Irish version of *Infant Joy* is an educational exercise. Ogham training was based on Ogham psychology, and the poet sought to create in himself and others an integrated will, in which emotion and intellect were harmonised. The aim of his humanist way of perfection was heroic action: rational reflection, far from being perfunctory, was indispensable. His song, which was intended primarily to be heard, and remembered, was a centre of power which could re-create in the disciple, by a process which cannot be immediate, the total mental experience which inspired its composition. I shall be obliged to discuss different aspects, and give different translations, of the Irish version of *Infant Joy*. This will misrepresent it: it should, rather, induce a contemplative mood, similar to the poet's creative moment, in which the full meaning can be grasped in one comprehensive vision.

To understand the following analysis, one needs some fragments of Irish knowledge. Two verbs, derived from *gair*, pronounced *gor*, "a sound," developed a variety of meanings, including the ideas "name" and "joy." The basic element of Joy's speech is neither the English "gurgle" nor its Irish correspondent, but a variable compound of the sounds *gor* and *gle* (with long *e*), in which, according to position, *gle* may lose its *g*, and *g* of *gor* become a peculiar sound midway between *g* and *y*, which I shall represent by *g*. *Gle*, as well as *gor*, can mean "joy." When Joy's gurgling is impeded in the second line, her *gle* becomes *gol-e*, and one meaning of *gol* is "weeping."

If Blake based an Irish poem on infant speech, the fact would be prominent in Irish, but could not appear in an English translation, without loss of the meaning Blake expressed in English.

The following unorthodox annotations of the Irish song will show the kind of thing which would necessarily be omitted. Joy begins :—

“ Without *gor-e* me
Me without och *gol-e*.”

An Irish hearer would of course understand from these lines the meaning Blake expressed in English, and also another meaning : “ I am without joy, me without -och, wind, woe.” Then the poet, since Joy has announced she has not *gor-e*, but *gol*, asks helpfully : “ What shall I *gor* thee ? ” But the relieved babe is now gurgling happily : “ *Glegor* I *gle*, *Gorle* is my *gorring*,” i.e., “ Joy sound I try to make, joy-joy is my name.” The wish which concludes the stanza has a fuller meaning in Irish : the poet wishes the babe joy-sound and clear speech as well as sweet joy.

The poet begins the second stanza by politely altering Joy's description of herself : *gon-gore*, “ without joy,” to *gan gor-ee*, “ pretty joy.” The babe is now in trouble again, and the next line expresses sympathy : “ Struggling speech with only two songs ” i.e., *gor* and *gul*, joy and sorrow. The implication is that Joy lacks the sleep song of Irish music. Joy recovers, and the line which corresponds to : “ Sweet joy I call thee,” means also : “ Bravo, little kin.” A different word is here used for “ sweet ” : *gaol*, pronounced *gael*, combines ideas which Blake held most dear, the clan, the Irish, friends, love, and loveliness.

The next two lines : “ Thou dost smile, I sing the while,” are, in infant speech : “ Thou *gorrest glegor*, I *gle* song *gor*,” i.e., “ Thou broodest a bright smile, I struggle in song speech.” This devious rendering of the English lines might seem an insignificant result of difficulty in translation. In fact, the Irish poem continues the contrast between *gor* and *gul*, and also the idea conveyed by “ Little kin.” Joy too is a singer. The epithet “ brooded,” in Irish *gortha*, is regularly used to describe an ardent countenance : Blake applied it once to the smile of Urizen. But here Joy brooding *gle-gor* is compared to a poet contemplating a poem, and her wind trouble is pleasantly assimilated to the function of a poet labouring with “ the poet's breath.” The phrase is very old, going back to *The Scholars' Primer*. “ The poet's breath ” was said to be of five words, the number which make up these two lines. The meaning of the final wish is intensified by the

recall of Blake's personal experience. "Sweet joy" in this context means "the speech and joy of kindred."

It seems to me hard to doubt that this witty and ingenious song was devised by Blake. More than one consideration might have inspired the choice of the particular consonants which are added to the basic *g*, *r*, and *l*. When Joy begins to speak, she is distressed by wind. The distress is relieved, is repeated, and again relieved. If Joy's alphabet was based on observation of a particular infant, the poet observed, it would seem, that the child sang two songs, corresponding to the opposed affects, comfort and discomfort. The happy song was a continuous "glegor glegor" interrupted sporadically by an *M* sound. This pattern was changed by wind trouble. Then until the child was relieved, *M* was prolonged, for it is then interpreted as a disyllable, *gle* (or *le*) was replaced by *gon* or *gol-e*, and at the moment of acute distress, *gor* became *och*. Joy's two songs may be represented as follows, with the happy song first in order:—

gle gor gle M	gor le M gor M
gon gor MM	gon MM och gol e.

As the poet considered the child's utterance, and the affects which produced it, he reflected on the development of thought and speech. Joy's speech patterns give a glimpse of his thoughts. Her sorrow song may be interpreted as a series of judgments, of which the subject is troubled *MM*. *M* will develop into the linguistic "me," but it appears likely that a thwarted and exaggerated *MM* will develop into the psychological "me." The poet comes to the rescue. Following the example of Ogma, who was fabled to have invented letters and to draw men after him by golden chains which connected their ears to his tongue, the poet attempts by the golden thread of poetry to draw the dim consciousness of Joy into the human community. We have learned that Joy was vocalising while the poet sang the second stanza. The song is, I believe, intended to be a duet. The babe's part in each stanza is her sorrow song, followed by two happy runs, which begin, however, with what appears in the plan of her speech as the second half of the joy song. The poet does not join in until the third line of the first stanza. In the fourth and fifth lines, poet and babe sing the joy song as it appears in the plan, and then to the end, the poet continues to sing with Joy her own

songs, introducing, however, meaningful variations. As Lusmore, when he overheard the fairies of Knockgraston singing "Monday, Tuesday, Monday, Tuesday," enchanted them by adding to their song a new phrase, "And Wednesday," so the poet sweetens Joy's consciousness by adding to her song a new consonant in *tu*, thou, and by altering her uncertain *gle*, joy, to *gael*, love. "Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday" are not mortal weekdays for the fairies, and the duet is for Joy merely a musical game, with a meaning which will grow with her consciousness. There is *tu* as well as *me*, sweet joy is *me* and *tu*, and *tu* and *me* are *gael*. Meantime though all Joy knows is the giant's pleasant singing, his words have a simple, affectionate meaning, such as a mother will murmur to soothe a babe. This aspect of the song may be called a *Song of Ogma*, and translated as follows:—

"Want-joy me
 Want me, och, wind, woe"
 "Poor child of mortal love."
 "Joy, joy, joy me
 Joy, joy me, joy me"
 "Little yew, sweet voice, thou (art)."

"Child of joy,
 Sweet voice with but two songs,
 Little love, my delight.
 Joy song is thine,
 Small fawn, mine Sorrow.
 Little yew, little Gael thou."

The Song of Ogma, the sweetest aspect of *Infant Joy*, may commemorate a birth ritual. I know no account of birth ceremonies in Gaelic Ireland, but some indirect evidence is suggestive. Dinneen gives similar explanations of a word and a phrase apparently unrelated, *scuit*, the vocative case of *scot*, an Irishman, and *scairteach amach*, calling aloud. He explains the phrase: "outcry, excitement, a birth"; and he explains *scuit*: "excitement, fuss, especially at a birth." The similarity suggests that the baby newcomer was joyfully and publicly welcomed into the Irish tribe.

The babe of *Infant Joy* represents Ireland at the time Blake composed his song. Catholic and Protestant, Erin was like a patient who had lost a lot of blood, passionately debating which of her remaining blood-corpuscles, the red or the white, were the

more worthy of life. Every line of the Irish Song begins with the letter G, for *Gort* or *Gath*, the Ivy, which was Christianity. The Fal was the hedge of Ogham trees which defended Ireland. Since Roman, as later Protestant, Christianity was debarred from protecting the Fal, *Gort* ceased to be included among the Fal trees, and its place was taken by the Yew.

The theme of three fine Irish tales is a search for lost treasures. Their less obvious meanings show that, though the symbols differ, all the tales describe the adventures of a hero who sets out to recover lost functions, the imagination, the wisdom, and the valour represented by three Fal trees, as a necessary preliminary to restoring the native government of Ireland. The reduced alphabet of *Infant Joy* expresses the opposite, not what Ireland lacks, but what she has left to build a nation. Instead of thirteen, she now has only seven consonants, and the Hawthorn of Christianity, instead of the Birch of Irish life, is the all-inclusive tree. The following plan expresses the Ogham view of culture in Ireland in those days:—

H, the Hawthorn

Male trees	Female trees
G, Ivy, the moon	L, Rowan
Ch, Witch-hazel, the sun	N, Ash
R, Elder	M, Vine

The plan is simple. Art, music, and science are no longer fostered in Ireland. Literature is written of Christian, none of Irish inspiration. The sun of Erin, the principle of her active life, is the Witch-hazel, not the ancient *Tinne*, the Irish heroic spirit. The consort of the Witch-hazel is the Ash, ambitious for sectarian power. The moon of Erin, the principle of her spiritual life, is the Ivy, whose consort is the superstitious Rowan. Out of these elements, it would be impossible to create the hero longed for in *fe fia* tales, the fourfold saviour, whose will should be controlled by reason, and executed with heroic energy, and whose reason and energy should be humanised by the values inculcated by imaginative art.

This aspect of *Infant Joy* was, for reasons other than literary, precious to an Ogham writer. In the first place, by expressing in Ogham terms the intellectual and moral poverty of his compatriots, he gave their judgment to the only people who had a right to condemn them, their injured "father and brothers," the

agelong stowaway host of the silenced and the banished. In the second place, he showed in clear and simple terms that art, wisdom, and civil manners were established among the Irish by no other light than that of their native culture. The term "civilisation" is used confusingly of things not necessarily co-existent: human values and material valuables. If any write the dirge of our present civilisation, they may write of its end as the vast savage realisation of the dream of a barbarian: "When I am dead let earth be wrapped in flame."

With the help of the 'Word Oghams of *The Scholars' Primer*, it is possible to translate the Irish poem as a *Song of Ogham Letters*. The first two lines will serve as example:—

"Without letters is M

Without B, she is Ch of foreign Ae."

I omit the rest, because this aspect of the poem requires annotations tedious to most people. Nevertheless, it was part of Blake's thought, and I have based on it one new idea in my final translation. When Har accused Tiriel of being "the king of rotten wood," he was using a Word Ogham of *The Scholars' Primer*, and declaring that Tiriel was Uradhran, that is, Yew song, and also, if the great tree of Tara was, as it probably was, the Yew, that Tiriel was the Tara High King.

Blake and the *fe fia* writers considered the sixth and the following centuries the most fateful period in the history of the Western islands. Thanks to their work, we begin to understand the images in which our forefathers pictured the struggle between Celtic and Roman Christianity, and between Christianity and the Wisdom of the Wood. Alien music of the sea, the seals' unearthly chanting, Columba, the dove, whose church is the Lamb of *The Songs of Innocence*, with his "grey eye" still turning from the sea to Irish woods, and on the heart's cliff, in the seat of a bird, Brigid guarding Ogham fire, most holy fire, weaving the golden thread. Spindrift of this poetry still floats in the haunted underwood of the Gaelic mind, in Scottish legends about seals, in the emotional life of some of the western Irish, where it remains in irrational dread of the sea, and irrational hatred of the cormorant, the black hag.

Columba's monks moved out of the monastery of Lindisfarne, the Celtic tonsure flagged on their devoted heads, because, they said, our fathers wore it. The British learned to look on their

Celtic fathers as "stained with poisonous blue," which in Irish means "the blue of heaven." Bede, describing Roman invasions of Britain, wrote as if he were a Roman, and called the natives of the land "the enemy." And Celtic Brigid laid on the lord of the world the solid fire and gold and gems of her cloak, and sprang from the Ogham fire of Ireland, "the hearth of the fair people," as St. Brigid, the Female Babe of *The Mental Traveller*. But Irish thought, though it went "on the run," did not die. It seemed indeed extinct when Blake began to write. The true meaning of the old tales was known then to few. The quest of the golden apples of the Hesperides became the poor man's forlorn hope of a crock of gold. Who, Blake asked himself, as he contemplated the spiritual nadir of his people, will uplift again the new-made Babe? This question is the heart of his thought, and every aspect of *Infant Joy* is an education of the Babe for her resurrection, for he was convinced that without a change in the Babe's emotional and intellectual attitudes, resurrection would be impossible. The final, and central, aspect of *Infant Joy* may be called a *Lament of Oothoon*, and translated as follows:—

"I am without honour, without joy,

Without the Birch, with only an uncertain life, a foreign day,
a day of vapour, of want, of danger."

"Ivy daughter of captivity, thou lackest the joy of the yew :
in thee, the Fal is mocked."

"My labour is contention,

My summons is a call to superstition."

"A pious cross art thou, O voice of the grey sea."

"Woman joy, spear of kings,

Voice of contention, impoverished, alas, under two foreign
governments,

A puny Gael I call thee : I summon the heroic spirit of
Ireland.

Reflect thou on Ogham letters.

I strive to deliver a voice from the tomb, my Ulster tongue,
the chief's call the call of the great yew,

Touch her with fire, thou tongue of the Gael."

EXTRACTS FROM THE UNPUBLISHED MEMOIRS OF THE LATE T. B. RUDMOSE-BROWN

Edited and selected by A. J. Leventhal

Professor Rudmose-Brown was an outstanding figure in Dublin's literary and academic world. When he came to Dublin in 1909 to occupy the Chair of Romance Languages at Trinity College he quickly adapted himself to the local idiom, identified himself with the aspirations of the people, met the political leaders as well as the poets and soon became a contributor to the IRISH REVIEW. Later, he was among the first to write for the DUBLIN MAGAZINE and kept up his association with this paper until 1942, the year of his death.

A man with an individual and independent outlook, he had courage as well as convictions and did not hesitate to speak his mind no matter how unpopular his views might be. His published work is mainly given up to the subject which he taught at the University but to this must be added a volume of verse, WALLED GARDENS, in which his partiality for eighteenth century French poetry showed its influence.

He began his memoirs a few years before the second world war but died before they were completed. Although they deal mainly with early half of his life, the present breaks through now and again, giving a sense of actuality to the writing. In choosing the following extracts, preference has been given to subjects of general interest, to the exclusion of much matter primarily of interest to the writer's family and intimate friends. It is believed, however, that the forceful personality of the man emerges from what is here printed.

I BEGAN this autobiography early in 1936: it arose out of a lecture entitled "Mes Préjugés" which I had given some time earlier to a College Society just after Dollfuss had deliberately wrecked the working class quarters of Vienna, but the project had been in my mind for some time—since I first knew I had *angina pectoris* in 1933. It was interrupted by my wife's death and I had not the courage to take it up again until recently. I have, I am fully aware, failed to make good, as man, as scholar, as thinker, as artist. I wish to seek the explanation. I am a mass of inconsistent prejudices. Only one belief have I held consistently and unalterably throughout my life, the intense and passionate faith in a fundamentally spiritual order, and its corollary, a belief in the individual, not the family or the nation, as

the fundamental unit, and hence in the urgent necessity of individual freedom.

“ My fealty is to God the Lord,
And Love who bears His flaming sword,
And Royal death, His servitor ! ”

I have always seen in my inmost being and been homesick for the town, the towers, and Palaces of God, which I saw in the western sky, one day long ago, from the top landing window of my father's house at Streatham. I have never denied the spirit, nor the possibility of miracles. I have seen the ghost of a cat. I have heard my dead wife speak to me and felt her presence and her hand on my shoulder. If my vision has been sometimes obscured, I can allege the numbness and barrenness that afflicts even the greatest mystics when God seems dead or very far away, as in a poem of Le Cardonnel's which I have translated.

But in another sense, in the realm of this world of Time and Space I have always been a sceptic. I have never been able to accept without question what I read in the papers. The statements of politicians, the affirmations of pedants (academic and other), the negations of moralists, the blether of clerics, have always roused me to antagonistic criticism. I have always doubted, always insisted on examining everything for myself, on passing all accepted beliefs through the sieve of reason. I do not deny that there exist categories which are not subject to rational investigation, but are a matter of faith. Far from it. But in the matter of these categories I have always been able to take my faith ready made from any of the monopolists of truth. My own faith, my own emotions, determine my attitude. I believe in God, not because it is reasonable to believe in God, but also not because the Pope or some Synod or General Assembly imposes this article of faith. I believe because I feel the presence of God not only in creation but in my soul. I accept no dogma and deny none. I allow to everybody complete freedom of belief. But when the Church—any Church—takes upon itself to lay down the law on what does not concern it, I protest and I oppose. Let those who wish form religious associations, Churches and what not. I respect all sincere faith. God, while always one, has an infinity of facets. All religions may be true. But I cannot accept the interference of a Church in politics, social economy and ethics. Ethics are a province of social hygiene,

a branch of sanitary engineering or of applied bacteriology. It concerns doctors not theologians. The encroachment of the latter on the domain of ethics retards the evolution of society, impedes the moral and even the physical cleansing of our towns and villages, without, moreover, profiting religion. Religion is a matter of faith and must not meddle with matters of reason. In the middle-ages, while I should have deplored the greed of the Emperors, I should, like Dante, have been Ghibelline rather than Guelf.

When I seek to discover the origin of my prejudices I note, first of all, the significant fact that I was born without a country. "La terre et les morts" mean nothing to me. I have no innate impulse towards social conservatism. Towns and landscapes have been for me, not symbols, not projections among my consciousness of a pre-existent and higher reality (as they are to a patriot who accepts the Country, the Nation, the State as metaphysical entities to which he owes submission) but things existing objectively in themselves. If I have loved passionately certain towns and landscapes of England, Scotland, France or Ireland, I loved them for themselves only. They were not for me the shadow of "My Country," the incarnation of "La Terre et les Morts" (no Cenotaphs, no anthems, no flags, no kings!) As far back as I can go in my memory I find no patriotism, no nationalism: I have been able to look upon the world without national prejudice. When politicians talk of "King and Country" or bandy the word "nation" I am doubly sceptical of their ulterior purpose (and trebly so when they affect ethical purposes, such as the rescue of small nations from the oppressor's claws, or propose to make the world safe for democracy or anyone or anything else except themselves and their backers!).

I have never, as far as I can remember, really cared for what ought to be, or what might be. Mine has been the scientific (or artistic) turn of mind, interested in what is, and why it is. That is perhaps why, when I studied philosophy in Aberdeen, the only system which appealed to me was the strictly deterministic. Perhaps that is why Racine pleases me more than any other dramatist. It was necessary for me to understand; when I understood I was satisfied. I have never been deceived by the cant and slogans and shibboleths of politicians and moralists: but I have never been indignant at the folly and corruption of the world.

What is fundamental in my outlook is the belief—the article of faith—that the most important thing in the world is the liberty of the individual, liberty in every sense, physical, mental, spiritual, his freedom to develop without hindrance according to his potentialities. Of course complete liberty is obviously impossible: we are determined by a thousand causes. Also, the liberty of one may impinge (but need not) on the liberty of another. But the greatest good is, for me, the greatest possible degree of individual liberty. That is why I am neither Fascist, nor Communist, Imperialist nor Socialist. My faith in individual liberty is based on my religious belief that God is in every one of us, and comes to his own, to full Godhead, only in and through each one of us. To impede the self-realization of any individual is to traverse the purpose and self-realization of the Divine. I am therefore in religion a mystic and have no patience with Churches and their imprisoning dogmas and their obscurantist moral teachings. As a mystic, I am interested in my relation with the Divine, not in refraining from doing this or that, not in ritual and ceremony. I have never, I think, formulated an ethical judgment. My judgments are intellectual or artistic.

I was born on January 11th, 1878, at 26 Guildford Road, South Lambeth, within the sound of Bow Bells, of a Scots father and a Danish mother. Like André Gide I have difficulty in fitting the incidents of my early life into exact chronological order. I seem to have retained vague memories of my first visit to Copenhagen: it is hardly possible. I was an infant. Still the deer park haunts me, and an upper room where an old admiral played with me on the floor.

I said in the lecture I have mentioned at the beginning of this chapter: "*Ma jeunesse est faite de briques roses au soleil couchant, de collines nues qui s'élèvent d'une plaine boisée, de villages plus vieux que l'histoire, dont les noms m'échappent, du bruit de cailloux que le flux retourne.*" I referred, too, to "*de petits bourgs aux noms de féerie, où les pavés et les feuillages lavés par une pluie récente, étincellent . . .*"

The South Downs in the green sunset, the Brighton Road at Burgess Hill, Horsted Keynes, Chiddingstone . . . Hampstead . . . Dudding Hill . . . the Welsh Harp, Carshalton in its setting of water, Banstead, Purley, the scent of Melilot just outside Carshalton . . . Dunton Green . . . when was I at Cromer? Earlier,

I think, 1891, perhaps. When did I first see the great St. John's Wort at Barming? Looking back, I think it must have been much earlier. . . . Other dim memories come back, but I cannot place them.

When did I first go to France? I was to visit a correspondent Andre Charbonnier at Montargis. There was no one to meet me there, and I took the next train back! A few months later, I ventured again, was met, and spent a few days at the Agricultural College. I ate every conceivable kind of salad—with dire results. Was it on this journey or the abortive one (I think the latter) that I was poisoned by drinking brandy from an aluminium flask, one of the very first on the market, and had a miserable month of pain? I remember being at Leatherhead one day, and at Ongar. My pains subsided while the train moved, and when I lay in the sun. I fancy all this belongs to 1895.

The only Kings whose health I have willingly and wholeheartedly drunk are the "King over the water," and the last King of Ireland, Edward VIII. Almost the only thing in which I agreed with Sir John Mahaffy was his contemptuous condemnation of a certain "great queen" as "morally, socially, and intellectually, on the level of a superior washerwoman." I refused, when I was a Lecturer in Leeds, to attend the opening of some new buildings by King Edward VII. Some kings no doubt serve their appointed purpose as Figure Heads and Yes Men, but they leave me cold. I am a constitutionalist and opposed to all violent revolution. I leave kings alone so long as they leave me alone. I have amused myself by referring in my lectures to Saint Charles the Martyr, and Lionel Johnson's verses move me deeply still.

Sometimes, out of nowhere, comes a memory. Such memories are the most vivid of all. They usually arise from an association. For example, a purple buddleia brings up a June afternoon when I arrived unexpectedly at Gerrard's Cross and found my wife having tea with the children by the front door (which was at the side) beside a buddleia in flower covered with butterflies. I think it was in 1924. The pity is that these memories cannot be continued in time forwards or backwards. If they could, I could relive the past, actually bring it to life again for more than a passing moment. But to dwell on the moment and attempt to extend it weakens the message and destroys its vividness, not

only for the time, but for ever : it never recurs so clearly again (Orpheus and Eurvdice, in a sense !). In 1928 I had such living impressions of a pine wood at Lumphanan under the snow—I must have seen it, with my wife, in the winter of 1905-06. But it has grown faint again. Ever and anon comes up a road with yellow oxalis growing against a wall. We came on it round a corner suddenly, cycling, in 1905, somewhere, I think, on the road to Aberfeldy. Much of that road is vivid still, but I cannot exactly place the spot where the oxalis grew—and I cannot swear it was not somewhere else. There is also a memory of eating nectarines (brugnons) at a café, out of doors, in the Forest of Marly—and a stay at Newhaven Harbour Hotel—both with my wife, but I cannot place them exactly.

Yellow mimulus (Monkey Flower) brings up, poignantly, before me a stream near Chalfont St. Peter where I walked with my wife long ago, when there was still hope in the world. It was near the golf links where Robert, my son, picked up stray balls with which he did a profitable but illicit trade. We talked of that. The first time I ever saw yellow mimulus was, however, in Caithness.

Blue chicory (I have a plant in the garden now, just past flowering, which Alice sent me from Brittany a year ago) recalls vividly a path between Hedgerley and Fulmer, where my wife and I walked one day. We had tea in a pub at Fulmer. A cloud seems to hang over that day, I cannot remember why, just as sunshine and intense happiness pervade the memory of the buddleia.

I wrote in my Lecture (already mentioned)—“ Plus tard, c'est la nuit qui tombe sur une gare écossaise, un ciel ouvert sur lequel courent des nuages sombres, un vent frais et des employés qui crient à tue-tête le nom de l'endroit où l'express s'arrête—Dunblane !

Il m'a fallu quelque temps pour m'habituer à l'Ecosse. Mais il me revient à la mémoire, presque sans y penser, des rangées de hautes montagnes couvertes de bruyère qui ferment l'horizon, des forêts de pins battus par le vent, des sous-bois obscurs où poussent de rares orchidiers et sous un ciel éclatant d'été le Col de Ballater où pour la première fois j'ai trouvé des mélampyres.

Je me rémémore les rives de la Dee émaillies de fleurs rares, ancolies, trollius, un versant boisé où la plus rare des plantes écossaises rampe à foison, la linnée borale, et peut-être ce que reste gravé le plus profondément en mes souvenirs, de hautes falaises précipiteuses, tombant à pic dans une mer nageuse, et qui cachent derrière leurs anfractuosités, à mi-hauteur, de petits marais remplis d'orchis parfumés.

Puis ce sont, près d'Aberdeen, des bois coupés de bruyères, et soleil qui se couche or et vert, à travers des branches effeuillées : des monolithes, des cercles druidiques, patinés de mousse, debout sur des tertres qui s'élèvent au milieu de bruyères désolés, ou même, quelquefois, sur le versant des montagnes. C'est, sur la côté septentrionale du Caithness, une mer froide et sombre, jamais en repos, qui déperle sur une grève de sable morne où poussent des chiens-dents. C'est une colline d'où, du seuil de la maison de mes ancêtres, l'on découvre, vers le nord, à travers une mer tempétueuse, les falaises éclatantes de blancheur des Orcades ! De cette époque, celle de mes années, d'étudiant, je garde des impressions plus humaines, aussi—d'un parc, où, assis sous des peupliers, j'ai lu Walter Pater, d'une jeune fille aux cheveux roux, à laquelle je dois ma première véritable initiation à la poésie . . . une autre, mathématicienne, morte hélas en 1899, ensevelie, une après-midi de neige et de tonnerre, sous une avalanche de roses italiennes, dans un petit cimetière du Moray —c'est la seule fois que j'ai lu l'Évangile dans un service religieux !

In the summer of 1902, I went to Paris as a Franco-Scottish Society's Bursar. I stayed at the "Etrangers" in the rue Racine, in the very centre of the Quartier. The Odéon with its book stalls was at the far end of the street. Across the Boul' Mich' was the rue des Ecoles, where I hunted for the slim volumes of the symbolists and decadents, then so easily found, now worth their weight in gold. There too was the Collège de France where I heard Gaston Paris and the Abbé Raisselot. I remember a lecture of Gaston Paris in which for over an hour he explained the original meaning of the word "bougre" ! Nearby was the Sorbonne. Memories of Faguet come to me, of Faguet jesting slyly into his "serviette" before the ladies of the Faubourg Saint-Germain who came in late and went out early. He was lecturing on Chénier. I attended the Cours publics of Tzoulet "le brouleur" and Tarde, without great advantage, save to

arouse and stimulate my scepticism in politics, and sociology. Along the Boul' Mich' were Stevenson's La Source and higher up by the Luxembourg Gardens Verlaine's François Premier, where Freddy Whyte (Sir Frederick now!) and D. H. Law disputed their claims to the throne of Scotland; both were descendants of Prince Charlie and Flora MacDonald. The Luxembourg Gardens were a paradise of beauty, children with their nursemaids or proud parents playing in characteristic French manner under innumerable trees, "parterres" laid out in symmetry of gay diversity of colour, and the reflection of the Palace in the water.

At the foot of the Boul' Mich' were the *Place* with the *Quais* to right and left—haunt of bouquinistes. In those days you might find anything there. And over the river, on the Ile de la Cité the Chapelle Royale, like a mediaeval miniature, and the great "vessel" (in the French sense) of Notre Dame—where, in the dim variegated light of stained glass reigned peace and mystic communion. There was Saint Séverin, too, behind the Place Saint Michel, dark as of the beginnings of French history, a refuge from the crying world, and the garden of the Musée de Cluny, cool on the hottest day, where I competed with nursemaids for a seat in the eternal shade!

It was now that I met the poets and painters in this eventful summer of 1902. Merrill came first to a Scots dinner in some hotel or other. I forget who was there. I got to know him well. In his flat high up among the trees of the Ile Saint Louis I met most of the symbolists—Vielé-Griffin, Fontainas, Boès who edited *La Plume*, Mazel, Fort, Mockel, and many others. They found my skull akin to Verlaine's whose bust presided over the gatherings. There at La Closerie des Lilas (now shorn of its glory) I met them all many times, except Vielé-Griffin, who never came to these "Bohemian" gatherings. There I met many times Moréas also, in his tall hat or straw boater and his rosette of the Legion of Honour. He would recite his *Stances* or talk to me of Mary Queen of Scots, in whom I was not at all interested. He was one of the dullest companions I ever came across. There too I had a brief glimpse of Apollinaire, that, perhaps, greatest and most original of all the poets of his time. There too was the Swedish Diriks with his wife and daughter, all drinking all night long. . . . Paul Fort was the presiding genius of the Closerie, with his Suzon, I well recall a drive up the Boul' Mich' one evening

from Merrill's flat to the *Closerie* with five of us in the *fiacre* and Paul Fort on the horse. He fell off into the gutter half way between the Rue des Ecoles and the Luxembourg Gardens. . . .

Bullier that Mecca of the English week-ender was opposite the Closerie. I was there only once, and I have never set foot in the Moulin Rouge or the Folies Bergère. My favourite place of amusement was Bobino, where Suzon took me first. The most worthy and respectable shopkeepers of Montparnasse, eating brandy cherries, with their wives and daughters, watched with delight a performance so obscene that I should have missed most of the jests and quips but for Suzon's running and quite adequate commentary. I have always had a passion for the incongruous.

I remember an evening in a café on the Grands Boulevards—one of my rare ventures into the orthodoxy of the *Rive droite*—with Merrill and Philippe Berthelot. 'We ate crayfish and drank champagne (not at my expense) and talked German! Berthelot offered me the Legion of Honour, which I refused. I never heard of Berthelot again until 1929 when we corresponded about the unveiling of a memorial to Merrill at Versailles, and the *Nouvelles Littéraires* printed a translation of part of a study of Merrill I had published in 1917. Both are dead. I knew Bibi la Purée, Verlaine's friend, a "mégottier" by profession, who, once a year, appeared in full dress and distributed his cards with M. le Vicomte de la Purée on them.

I went to see Vielé-Griffin in his Passy flat. His Cross of the Legion of Honour hung on a photograph of Mallarmé.

Moréas dying declared: "Je n'ai jamais rien fait qui fût indigne d'un poète!" He was distressed too because he had told his friends he would die at a certain hour, "et voilà que je suis encore en vie!" I liked Moréas's prose better than his verse. At a later date his prose studies in *Vers et Prose* and the thin plaquettes in which they were collected were a great joy to me, as also his *Contes de la Vieille France*. The latter are associated in my memory with a morning, the exact date of which I cannot fix, several years later. I was in Paris with my wife at the Britanique near Les Halles. After dinner the night before I had foolishly taken a couple of Pernods. We were to leave for England in the morning. In the morning I couldn't get out of bed. We had to wait, and I remember Moréas's *Contes* lying there on the table. I never saw the book again. Where is it? How did I

lose it? Fort's earliest work I liked much better than the interminable series that followed. But I liked Fort very much. Merrill had constituted himself Fort's mentor and guardian, and it was a full-time task. Fort was completely irresponsible, and always "broke."

Towards the end of this summer, I chanced on my boyhood's friend James Bolivar Manson (afterwards Director of the Tate Gallery) with his new wife Lilian Laughner, an accomplished singer and pianist. They were very hard up, and so was I, having spent my *Bourse*; besides my room and "petit déjeuner" already paid for, I had about a couple of francs a day left. The three of us lunched and dined at a tiny restaurant in the rue Raspail (or one of its several detached *tronçons*) for a franc or less, each. We took tea in the Mansons' room—I brought the biscuits. In the evenings we foregathered with the painters. I remember Epstein and one Grenner especially, and two Scottish girls, one called Aitken. Those were happy days and nights of penury and companionship. Gide the Economist took me to several "Universités populaires," where I met the anarchists. One of them, in especial, a workman in the Mint, became a friend: I have dined with him and his wife in an attic flat in the rue Monge. These anarchists were charming and sincere and have left a memory of great sweetness and honesty. I was also taken to the Russian nihilists' restaurant, where, if suitably vouched for, a good meal could be had for 4d. Gide spoke contemptuously of his nephew André—the great Gide now—and I fancy the contempt was reciprocated.

I went to Wissons more because of the strange name and the fantastic tramway that led there than for any other reason. I knew, too, all the suburbs and near environs of Paris, and I travelled on all the old horse bus routes and steam and electric tramways. For three *sous* you could go from one end to another of any bus route. I recall with especial delight the old white bus that ran from the Odéon, through the Tuileries, and up the rue Richelieu to Montmartre—Odéon—Clichy. I knew Paris inside out. I have never been able to accustom myself to the post-(1914) war Paris of petrol buses and metros. In my day there was but one line of the Métro—Boulogne to Vincennes. I remember one day the *midinettes* were running their race. You saw them pass a certain point, caught the Métro and arrived in time to see them again further on. The Métro was crowded, sitting,

standing, and hanging on to the footboards—delightful French contempt for law. France, then, was full of regulations, but, as nobody ever observed any of them, it did not matter. France, and the world, has been “nazified” since then. A dispute with an “Agent” could be readily settled, if you addressed him as “mon Général” ! Passports and all the other imbecile inventions were unknown, or at least useless. I had two, in both of which my name was spelt wrong, but I never showed either of them anywhere. You could stay in France anywhere and for as long as you liked without any formality whatever. A student was supposed to have a *Permis de Séjour*, but nothing happened if he didn't. At Grenoble in 1902-3 I took out a *Permis* : but every single statement in it was either incorrect or misspelt, and I never had any occasion to use it. But I made the acquaintance of Monsieur Sima, the Commissaire à la Gare, whose daughter, whom I have never seen, still writes to me ! Those were the days of freedom. I have crossed from France into Italy and back into France without anyone taking the least notice of me in any way. The Italian frontier guard was making love to a French washer-woman. The French frontier guard was absent. I was young and full of hope and the world was before me, a “brave new world,” so unlike this world of to-day, fraught with my own failure and the more terrible failure of the politicians who, mis-called statesmen, misrule us in their malice and folly, their greed and stupidity.

How shall I recapture the smell of Paris ? It is unique in the world, save that it is found, in a modified form, in every town in France. The Midi adds garlic to it, however. I know that, the *pissoitière* is for far too much in its make up ! But there are other and more aromatic elements, roasted coffee, cooked food, lavender, asphalt, immemorial dust and dirt, the *relent* of the Seine—I know not what else ! But he who has smelt Paris retains a nostalgia for the indefinable odour which assails him as he leaves the Gare Saint Lazare or the Gare du Nord.

Parmi les centaines d'impressions qui me restent de Grenoble, je choisis celles qui me paraissent les plus vives, en tant qu'elles surgissent sans effort des profondeurs de mon inconscient pour peu que je me laisse aller à la dérive de mes souvenirs.

Ce sont, d'abord, des montagnes, couvertes de neige, sous un ciel d'un bleu éclatant, et qui courent vers l'Italie—le Belledonne. Puis ce sont, poudroyantes de soleil, une véritable muraille de falaises grises, qui borne la vallée plantureuse du Grésivaudan. J'ai aussi l'impression de prairies couvertes de narcisses, de ravins où poussent des milliers de primevères roses dans un cadre grandiose de pics neigeux d'où coulent des glaciers. Je me rappelle, parmi mes courses, celle que j'ai fait avec John Purves, de Saint-Pierre de Chartreuse à Grenoble. Le soleil se couchait comme nous nous engagions dans un col assombri par une grande forêt de pins. Le chemin était couvert de neige. Il gelait. Dans la forêt on entendait le hurlement des loups. En sortant de la forêt nous avons aperçu le clair de lune qui tombait sur les pics. Nous sommes arrivés au Sappey qui domine de bien haut la vallée du Grésivaudan. Je n'oublierai jamais le souper qu'on nous y a servi : la bonne chaleur après le froid des montagnes, à l'abri des loups.

Je me rappelle aussi le voyage que j'ai fait au Lautaret, accompagné de ma soeur et de Freddy White, qui ne cessait de déclamer des poésies de Yeats. Passé Uriage et Vaulnaveys et Vizille, le tramway s'engage dans un étroit vallon de nouillères : c'est surtout la descente qui me revient, les lumières des petits villages, Ricuperaux et Séchilienne, scintillaient au fond de la nuit. Un torrent coulait près de la route. J'ai eu l'impression d'un passage à travers une gorge interminable. . . . Je me rappelle une prairie odorante près de la Grande Chartreuse (this really belongs to 1904) dont le parfum était fort comme celui de la liqueur même, et énivrait : je me rappelle l'herbe haute des prairies de Quaix où l'on se perdait presque au milieu des muscaris bleu-ciel et des orchis sauvages, je me rappelle des haies de houx lourdes de baies écarlates, des bois où, à l'orée des clairières, poussaient d'innombrables orchis-papillon embaumant la vanille (the real red vanilla orchid I did not find until 1905) : des prés humides semés de primevères, de cette espèce à tige haute qui porte un bouquet de fleurs jaune d'or (oxlips), et partout le long de sentiers printaniers des violettes odorantes de toute forme et de toute couleur.

Old Professor Jones of Glasgow, who was staying, that summer of 1903, at La Tronche, took me to task for my Clericalism.

Now, I have always stood for freedom, I have never loved Priestcraft, but French Anti-Clericalism was then—and is now, I suppose—in no way allied to a love of freedom. It is, and was, a personal hatred of God, not conceived as non-existent, but as a bitter enemy who must be downed at all cost. Agnosticism is understandable, provided it is tolerant. But the orthodoxy of atheism is a thousand times more intolerant than any Clericalism. The Government organ in Grenoble published a full list of all the clergy of the diocese of Grenoble with the names of their (supposed) mistresses and their place of rendezvous! The Clerical organ retorted with equally or more savoury details about the Anti-Clerical leaders. I have never liked French Anti-Clericals *en masse*. Their stupid denial of the spirit, combined with their dithering fear of the God they disown, make them like the caricatures of themselves by such writers as Villiers de l'Isle Adam. Curiously enough most of my French friends since then (such was the impression made on my mind) have been devout and often Royalists—I have remained a Catholic Royalist in France while I became a Republican (with all it implies) in England, whatever I may now be in Eire. And for the same reason: hide-bound stupidity and hatred of the things of the spirit is bound up in France with orthodox Anti-Clerical Republicanism but in England with "God Save the King" orthodox Royalism.

PARIS, 1904-5.

We went to the Closerie, where my wife was much intrigued with Gaston Danville who attempted to prove to her that the body was immortal and the soul mortal.

Either now or at a later visit, we met Picasso in a café on the Boul' Mich'. He would not take off his overcoat—he had nothing under it. He wanted to paint my wife. As late as 1935 she reproached me still for my refusal to allow her to sit to him. But how was I to know the fame he would attain, or that his request was really that of a great artist and not of a "marcheur"? I wished that I had agreed.

In 1905 Paul Fort founded his *Vers et Prose*. In the fourth issue (décembre 1905) appeared two translations of mine into French: Fiona Macleod's *Prayer of Women* and a revolutionary poem by William Morris.

I thought I would soon be well away as a colleague of the Symbolists. The same number contained contributions by Gide, Verhaeren, Maeterlinck, Vielé-Griffin, Moreas, Jammes, Valéry, Remy de Gaumont, Mockel, Apollinaire and others. But somehow or other it came to nothing. I never wrote again for *Vers et Prose*.

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In the *Mercur de France* (15 janvier 1906) appeared my article on *L'Idée Celtique dans l'oeuvre de Fiona Macleod*. I had a few articles in *l'Européen* also, including *William Sharp (Fiona Macleod)* and *La Lutte des Églises en Écosse* (both 1905—I remember writing the latter in a tent in a garden at Pitlochry). Later on, in 1907, in Leeds, I wrote a long article for *Dumernil's Amitié de France* (a strongly Catholic quarterly) on Scotland, and still later in Dublin one on William Morris (never printed, owing to the death of that great and gentle and charming Catholic philosopher).

I saw Merrill* again in Brussels in 1907 (I think) and again at Dover in 1908. His Bab had deserted him some time earlier, and in 1907 he was living with his fiancée's family in Belgium. I spent a few days in Paris in Merrill's flat with his cats, and then went on to Brussels. He was much changed, the old insouciance had gone. We did not hit it off so well, I fear. In 1908 at Dover, where he was establishing domicile in order to be married in England, I found him broken in health and almost an invalid. We parted good friends, but I never saw him again and hardly ever heard from him. Then came the war and his death. The old intransigent socialist had, alas, contrary to all I expected, been caught in the war fever and one of his last poems is an absurd ditty in praise of Tommy Atkins. The "Left" is apt to forswear all its principles when mass hysteria breaks out. Romain Rolland who weathered the last war nobly and solitarily has, I hear, pronounced his blessing on this war! I have not—but then I was always more an individualist than a Lefter; my paths coincided with theirs on occasion, but I have always stuck to my (hatred of) guns and retained my hostility to any form of State or National or other interference with the imprescriptible right of the individual to "realize" his own destiny, face to face with

*Stuart Merrill dedicated his poem "Le Vagabond" to Rudmose-Browne. It appears in *Les Quatre Saisons*.

God. I have never done and never will do service, lip or otherwise, to King or President, State, Nation, the Community. "My fealty is to God the Lord, and Love who bears His flaming sword, and Royal Death His Servitor!" I esteem more highly and have more, fundamentally, in common with the Martyrs who died at the stake than with the Patriots who die for a Nation, in other words, for the enslavement of the individual to Society. So long as men fight for individual freedom, from the tyranny of their own Rulers and from the tyranny of alien Usurpers, I am with them. But I will not bow my head under any National yoke.

In 1925 I was in Paris again, for the first time since the war of 1914-18. I went to see Auguste P. Garnier, the poet-publisher, whose works appear from time to time in very beautifully printed and illustrated plaquettes. Mine bear dedications in his elaborate script rather reminiscent of Rachel Annand Taylor's. He received me most kindly, introduced me to Allem, the editor of *La Muse Française* which has reached me regularly from that day to this (it has ceased publication with the outbreak of the present criminal and futile war), and suggested a visit to his home in Normandy, which, alas! has never, through my own remissness, materialized, any more than a visit to André Gide which was projected. Gide I have never seen, although we have corresponded pleasantly: as late as 1937 he sent me the second of his little books on the U.S.S.R.

I was twice in France that year, spring and summer. The summer was mainly devoted to mushroom hunting in the Forêt de Fontainebleau. I became almost expert in distinguishing the edible from the non-edible or poisonous species, and I explored the Forest from end to end. I met at Fontainebleau the Napoleonic novelist Georges d'Esparbès, curator of the Château. I was introduced to him in a café as an "Irlandais." He leapt to his feet, kissed me on both cheeks (he was bearded and stank of absinth), ordered more drinks and then, in the middle of the café, shouted "Vive la glorieuse République irlandaise! Merde pour l'Angleterre." I had some difficulty in explaining to him that Ireland was neither a Republic nor glorious, whatever we might wish. He told me how long ago, with Madame Gonne McBride, he had toured Ireland and made inflammatory speeches against Britain, learnt by heart as he knew no English. He sent

his love to her. I delivered it. "Mon amour, comprenez-vous, non mes amitiés. J'aime les femmes de quatre-vingts ans!" he yelled. Just then his sister came, as usual, to take him home. So much for the *entente cordiale*—the most superficial and specious and spurious of merely political catchpenny alliances! In 1932 I asked an eminent Professor of Philosophy at Montpellier why the French liked the Irish so much better than the English, although we (the Irish) had stabbed their "gallant ally" in the back during the Great War. He replied, "C'est précisément pourquoi nous vous aimons!" And that I have always found was the general French attitude, among all classes from the ultra-right *Action française* to the extreme Left.

I have tried to make Eugène Viala known in my *French Town and Country*—which was reviewed and praised in *L'Auvergnat de Paris*! Incidentally this book, and my two series of *French Short Stories* brought me into correspondence with many illustrious French writers. Leaving the Contal I went to Le Puy, of which I have spoken elsewhere (in the *Dublin Magazine*). I was on my way to meet Louis Pize, the poet of the Vivarais and the biographer of Saint François Régis. I met him and his wife at Dunières. We talked of Francis Jammes. Like myself Pize preferred his earlier work, before he began to exude "l'odeur de sacristie" too intolerably (Pize is very devout, let me say). I remember the "colchiques" (autumn saffron) in a damp low lying meadow near the station. For ever they will be associated for me with Pize. I grew purple autumn saffron at Ballybrack in 1933 and 1934. But they did not do very well and died out after that.

The year 1927 begins a new chapter of my French friendships. I was at Avignon for a day or two on my way to Nice. From Nice, after a week or two of intolerable heat and torture by mosquitos, I fled to Valence, and thence to Tain, where Hermitage wine is grown. From there or rather from Taunon across the Rhône I travelled by the French apology for a bus to Saint Félicien to visit Charles Forot, poet and publisher, in his Cévennes fastnesses. After four or five hours' jolting in very mixed company (I refer not to the human but the animal passengers) I was put down at the door of "Le Pigeonnier." Forot was waiting for me, Forot the extreme royalist fanatic and the most conservative, reactionary, and withal most charming of men. Behind the

house is a terrace overlooking a garden, where plays are sometimes performed. Forot, from time to time, would look up at the creeper-covered house and murmur: "Ah, la vieille maison!" as if age in itself merited profound respect. We talked far into the night of most things, the "Action Française," the Pope, Religion and Religious, literature, Ireland, the English (pejoratively!) women, even Trinity College, the misdeeds of Republican and democratic governments, Cosgrave and Mussolini. The Pope had just suppressed the "Action Française." Royalists were divided in their allegiance. Forot was prepared, if need be, to throw over the Church rather than the King. "Forot chante les espoirs déçus, les veilles de départ, les beaux souvenirs amers, avec une sagesse qui n'oublie rien des anciens deuils. Sa poésie est imprégné de la fervente mélancolie des paysages d'Octobre en Vivarais. Il en a l'ardeur contenue, l'âpreté."

Next day, loaded with books published by Forot, I left for Saint-Bonnet le Froid to see Louis Pize. I passed that curious place, La Louves, where Saint François Regis lies, half pilgrimage, half summer resort, high in the mountains. Towards evening I reached Saint-Bonnet, where Pize was waiting for me in front of the Mairie. Saint-Bonnet lies very high in the Cevennes, at an altitude of nearly 4,000 feet, among wide meadows and pine and beech woods. It rained all the time I was there. Pize told me that the town had petitioned to change its name to Saint-Bonnet le Chaud, in order not to discourage tourists! Pize is the finest poet among the Neo-Classics (or Neo-Romantics!) He writes of the wild beauty of his native mountains. He admires Jammes and Stuart Merrill, and above all Le Cardonnel, the greatest religious poet of modern times, worthy to rank with or above Francis Thompson. "C'est un Homme, c'est un grand poète. Quoique religieux, il ne sert pas la sacristie. C'est un buveur. Je l'ai vu ivre-mort à Valence. Il fait des gaffes énormes." I have never seen Le Cardonnel, although I have corresponded with him. I translated four of his poems, which appeared in *Studies*, *The Irish Rosary*, and *T.C.D.*, and a pupil of mine, Miss Phyllis Aykroyd, has written a book in French on this great "poète et platonicien" and disciple of St. Francis of Assisi.

In the damp meadows, once more, the purple saffrons were beginning to show: the pines and beeches dripped rain as I left for Dunières, on my way once again to Saint-Etienne. At Saint-

Etienne I got a bath (about all the town is fit for!) and lunch in the excellent Buffet at the station, and departed for Usson where I was to spend a week with the Perons. My adventures at Usson do not concern this story. But while I was at Usson, I went to see Henri Pourrat, the novelist and chronicler of the Livradois and an excellent poet. The journey was rather formidable. Ambert, where Pourrat lives, is only some 15 miles from Usson as the crow flies, but it is some 90 miles by rail, by as slow a train as even the French cross country lines provide, changing at Sembadel high on the plateau. At Ambert I put up in an old fashioned hostelry, now closed, where I had as fellow visitor an Oriental Potentate with two wives who had come there to buy sacred images of his faith from Monsieur Vaure's "idol-factory," as I called it, to Pourrat's indignation. The making of sacred emblems of all sorts is a staple industry of Ambert. Monsieur Vaure used to come to Dublin to sell rosary beads until the tariff ruined his trade. He received me most hospitably, and produced champagne and Huntley and Palmer's biscuits—very expensive in France. Pourrat met me at the hotel. He is the most charming and kindly of all men, a devout Catholic, but tolerant and not an intransigent royalist. What he doesn't know about the Livradois is not worth knowing. Every man, woman and child in the valley of the Dore and its enclosing mountains is his personal friend. He showed me the paper mills, an immemorial industry, primitive to the last degree, and alas! declining,—the hand-made paper of Ambert is the best in the world. He took me to Courpières to visit Christiane Faunier and her sister who was an authority on Berkeley and a graduate of Oxford. We were asked to lunch by a millionaire linoleum manufacturer in a vulgarly ostentatious brand new "Chateau." Christiane Faunier's husband, a naval-officer, shocked the "nouveau-riches" by his stories of life among the cannibals. "Je n'ai jamais rien mangé de si bon que du poignet de bébé!" he declared. From Usson I went to Vichy. Valery Larbaud, small and round, with a straw boater on his head, met me at Saint-Germain les Forsés, and drove me to his house (or rather one of his houses) at Vichy. Larbaud is known to Irishmen as the friend and translator of Joyce. But he is also an erudite scholar and an excellent novelist and poet, with a captivating cynicism about all things. His work on Scève and Racan is well-known. His short stories are among

the best in French. He knows London intimately and accurately. I will quote here what I wrote of him in 1927 :—" Je n'avais jamais vu Larbaud. J'ai trouvé à la sortie de la gare un tout petit homme, très gros, vêtu d'un pantalon blanc et coiffé d'un chapeau de paille, à la parole très lente. Je l'ai trouvé très sympathique à tous les points de vue. Il ne ressemblait pas à un Français : il ne parlait guère. Il nous a fait conduire à Vichy dans la plus vieille automobile que j'ai jamais vue, qui remontait sans doute à la première ère de l'automobilisme. Noé s'en était servi pour conduire sa famille au quai d'où partait l'arche. Mais c'était une voiture des plus confortables. On y dormait à son aise. Elle avait une vitesse de trente kilomètres à l'heure et pas de panaux ! "

Vichy is abominable. We stayed there just long enough to visit Monsieur Jules Thomas, a collector of porcelain, and to see Larbaud's remarkable library, housed in a building of its own, with a librarian to care for it—for Larbaud is a very wealthy banker. There I saw all Joyce in first editions, as well as every French and English and Spanish author I had ever heard of in first editions and " éditions de luxe." Larbaud reads all continental European languages, and speaks all fluently except modern Greek and Swedish, and even these he can stumble through fairly well. His English is better than mine. Irish he does not profess to know.

Larbaud spoke to me of almost all the problems of life. He invented the " monologue intérieur " before Joyce. Most of his work deals with the psychology of women. Here are a few of Larbaud's *obiter dicta* :—

" Les femmes vivent dans l'inconscient, les hommes dans le conscient. Les femmes abominent l'analyse intellectuel : en s'analysant elles craindraient de se rendre compte de leur vide intérieur."

" La seule différence entre une béguele et une jeune fille revoltée c'est que celle-là a perdu l'espoir de s'amuser et ne veut pas que d'autres s'amusent."

" Si je vivais sous Leon X, je serais Catholique. Mais je ne vais pas à la messe. Pour moi le Catholicisme n'est pas un refus de la vie. C'est la pleine acceptation de la vie. Aucune audace de l'intelligence ne dépasse les limites de la foi. C'est une coupe qui ne déborde jamais et qui peut tout contenir."

" On parle beaucoup aujourd'hui de l'inconscient. C'est bien. Il fallait s'en occuper. Je m'en suis occupé moi-même. Mais n'oublions pas que Racine en savait plus long que Joyce et que Freud. D'ailleurs, il ne faut pas trop s'en occuper à l'exclusion des procès conscients. L'inconscient est le domaine des rapports entres les diverses unités qui composent le système qu'est notre vie. En nous y plongeant nous rapportons sans doute des trouvailles, des vérités, mais seulement des vérités relatives. La vérité absolue est du ressort de la conscience. Seul parmi les animaux, nous avons un idéal, des aspirations, un essor vers je ne sais quoi, Dieu si vous voulez, à moins que vous ne préfériez traiter de Dieu la force motrice de la vie inconsciente, ce qui me semble plus conforme aux faits. Un homme qui vivrait tout entier dans l'inconscient ne serait guère plus qu'un singe qui se tiendrait plus debout et qui pourrait se servir d'un langage plus compréhensible. Ne laissons pas trop empiéter cet inconscient amoral, amorphe même, sur les formes, l'harmonie, la composition que nous appelons la vie consciente, idéal . . . ce que vous voudrez! "

Larbaud had a story of mine printed in France (*Transition*, December, 1927). He characterized it as " très bien pensée, mais très malfaisante." I have not seen him again. My only later visit to France in 1932 synchronized with an absence of his, or an illness, I forget which. We corresponded until he became too ill to write. Of all the Frenchmen I have known and liked, I liked him best, and had most in common with him. Not that I wish to belittle the gentle charm and courtesy, and unshakeable faith of Pourrat. I am devoted to Pourrat, but he belongs to a different world. His *Gaspar des Montagnes* is, I think, one of the most delightful romances in French, comparable only to Alain Fournier's *Le Grand Meaulnes*, an everlasting masterpiece, but is has not the depth of Larbaud's work, nor his intellectual and spiritual curiosity.

In 1932 I saw France again. I had promised to attend the annual commemoration of Mistral's death at Maillane, his birth-place. My interest in Provençal, never dead, had revived. I had written articles for Mistral's nephew's periodical, now defunct—I recall especially a *Chronique d'Irlande* setting down the bitter disillusion I felt under the Cosgrave régime. I had made a study of the Albigenian " Crusade," and had reviewed Henri Duclos' book on Saint Dominick (to his satisfaction, he told me, a bettes

and more understanding notice than he had got in France, even in Catholic quarters). Soon after, that same summer, Segne (or Baroun) Rudmose-Brown was to be proclaimed a "Sòci d'òu Felibrige" at the convention of Provençal writers held at Agde.

I went to Avignon. On my first visit in 1927 I had been lucky to find a room at 10 francs in a third-rate hotel, with a skylight, through which, by sticking out my head, I could see the hundred spires of the Papal City in the sunset. This time, thanks to Mistral *neveu* and Monsieur Outin, a "Commissaire de Police," I stayed in the best hotel at half the price charged to American tourists and was treated like a Prince. But I liked it less. I do not care for Avignon, except historically. Its renowned walls are carefully restored fakes. "La masse imposante du Palais des Papes qui anéantit la ville ne ressemble aucunement, malgré les poètes, à un ostensor soulevé au-dessus des rues agenouillées. C'est un monstre plutôt qu'un monstrescence." It is a pleasure, however, to find the names of Aubanel and Roumanille over bookshop windows, and the Rhône is always the Rhône. Maurras has written ecstatically of Avignon, but all I saw was a spurious resort of gaping sightseers and a cancerous growth of caravanserais. Cosmopolitan animation perhaps, but I regretted the days of Queen Joan : Avignon has lived so long on the memory of its greatness, on Petrarch and the Popes, that it has forgotten its squalor and its tawdriness.

Orange left me cold. Nîmes, except for the "Jardin de la Fontaine" is little better than Béziers. It is the metropolis of Meridional Protestantism. Arles disappointed me. I saw no "Arlésiennes." I liked the old quiet white streets and Saint-Trophime is beautiful, but post-cards are sold in the cloisters. The capital of the Kingdom of Arles has forgotten its grandeur. The Aliscamps are utterly ruined by the proximity of railway sidings and pig styes and are in a deplorable state of neglect. Yet in this old cemetery, Jesus-Christ Himself kneeled to pray and the Angelic Choir sang !

I met Pourrat again. It was still winter in Ambert : no orchards full of ripe plums of all kinds, as on my former visit. Pourrat took me to see Jean Angeli's brother—Jean l'Olagne was dead—and we walked with Alexandre Vialette, the translator of Kafka. There were a few red primroses and some other spring flowers, under dark skies, but no lush wealth of bloom as on

my former visit. I went to see Pourrat's new house, just built but not yet inhabited, and his garden to be, just planted in part. He showed me the room I was to occupy if and when I came to stay with him for a long visit.

I have never been in France again. I have kept up my correspondence with Pourrat, with Dr. Henri Duclos, with Larbaud, as far as possible, occasionally written to Pizet, Garnier and others. In 1931 I had sent Moira Scarff to see Pourrat, others have gone since: notably Oisín Kelly who found the Livradois very like the West of Ireland. I doubt if I shall ever see France again, what with my angina, this futile and criminal war, and the penury it imposes on the less fortunate of us. I can at least keep inviolable the happy memory of my last days in Paris with my wife. Less than a year later began the long decline and physical and mental torment which ultimately brought her life and all my hopes to an end.

DRAMATIC COMMENTARY

By A. J. Leventhal.

WAITING FOR GODOT. By Samuel Beckett. Criterion Theatre, London, and The Pike Theatre Club.

TWILIGHT OF A WARRIOR. By Walter Macken. Abbey Theatre playing at The Queen's Theatre.

THE LARK. By Jean Anouilh. Translated by Christopher Fry. Gate Theatre. CAFE DE PARIS. London.

Waiting for Godot is at the moment of writing being produced in English, in the author's translation, both at the Criterion Theatre, London, and the Pike Theatre in this city. The London production differed from the Paris one, which was discussed in this Magazine some time ago, in so far as the stage was less bleak and that our withers were not wrung so intensely. Peter Hall, the producer, without pandering to a West End audience, trimmed ever so lightly (for there was little to offend the descendants of Mrs. Grundy) the more realistic passages but there was a wide margin left for a dignified presentation—one that lives in the memory. Particularly outstanding was the performance of Peter Woodthorpe in the part of Estragon, a subtler creation than that of his fellow-in-waiting Vladimir. In contrast to the Criterion, the Pike Theatre followed the text of the author in this respect (but not in others) with pious exactitude. It was a pity they thought it necessary to issue a circular warning the public that their maiden-aunts, so to speak, might be shocked. Few are shocked nowadays by the traditional (mainly oral) terminology for certain physiological functions, and in any case such words have but a minimal part in Mr. Beckett's play.

The real innovation in the Irish production lies in making the two tramps (Austin Byrne and Dermot Kelly faithfully efficient) speak with the accent of O'Casey's Joxer tempered by Myles na gCopaleen's "Dubalin" man. It sounded strange at first and the laughs seemed to come more from the intonation than the text, but the added humour helped the audience to bear the more searing portions of the play. One is, however, not sure that this departure was justified. It seems evident that the author had in mind a universal rather than a regional application of his vision of mankind in perpetual expectation, desperately endeavouring to fill the hiatus between birth and death. There must be some significance in the fact that the names of all the characters suggest a different nationality; Estragon is French, Vladimir is Russian, Lucky is English (Irish and American too), Pozzo is Italian. On the other hand, the point might be made that the effective use of the local idiom would also be a proof of the universal applicability of the play since its intrinsic quality would lose nothing by the change.

Mr. Beckett's origin has caused the view to be widely accepted that the whole conception of *Waiting for Godot* is Irish, a fact which the original French has been unable to conceal, it is claimed. The Pike Theatre production lends support to this view, and it may well be that *Waiting for Godot* will go down in the local records as a lineal descendant of the works of the high literary kings of the Irish dramatic renaissance. It is understood that there is a proposal to translate the play into Irish which would assist in bringing about a general acceptance here of this theory. Indeed later literary historians might align Mr.

Beckett with George Moore who, in his efforts to help in the revival of the Irish language, suggested that he might compose his work in French which could be translated into English for the convenience of the Gaelic Leaguers who would then, in their turn, have little difficulty in turning the text into Irish. If the truth were told, the Germans would have more justification in claiming Mr. Beckett than they had when they took Shakespeare to their Teuton bosoms, for the song which Vladimir sings in the second act, in the original version, beginning :

Un chien vint dans l'office

Et prit une andouillette,

comes straight from the German :

Ein Hund kam in die Küche

und stahl dem Koch ein Ei.

Lucky is the character which stands out as Mr. Beckett's most original creation, and much depends on the playing of the part. Jean Martin in Paris and Timothy Balison in London spoke the long automatic monologue as though it had the background of sense evident in the text. In the Dublin performance, however, Donal Donnelly smothered his words in the hysteria of his delivery. Beginning at top speed, he had nothing left for his climax when the mechanism of the record (as it were) breaks down into helpless repetition. Nigel Fitzgerald's Pozzo had the right kind of pompous self-satisfaction and ultimate, almost dignified, blinded impotence. The Pike Theatre must be congratulated on their enterprise in mounting possibly the most important drama of this century.

Walter Macken has made considerable strides both in matter and technique with his new play *Twilight of a Warrior*. He has not completely lost his partiality for melodrama, but what there is of it is left for the final moments of the play—moments which, in the circumstances seemed unconscionably long. His central figure Dacey Adam (a brisk, subtle impersonation by Rae Mac an Aili) domineers his household. Tyranny in the home is no new idea. This character, however, is no *pastiche*, but lives in its own right ; Dacey's obstinate pride must inevitably be broken if the play is to have any meaning. To get his own way and prevent his daughter's marriage, he is prepared to blacken his own character and claim the suitor as his natural son. We, the audience, are in doubt whether this is a ruse or not, but the young man Abel Martin (a nice study in peasant simplicity and outrightness by Micheal O hAonghusa) knows that Dacey is lying. The battle between these two—mature worldly thrusts countered by sincere unaffected parries—is memorable. The dialogue, the pointed curtains help to mark this play as being of high rank and make it all the more acceptable after so many dreary forerunners on the seemingly effete Abbey stage. Eamon O Guaili's production, except for the final prolonged dying scene (one expected Wagnerian *Götterdämmerung* music), was swift and sure, while the cast did justice to what was, all considered, a fine play.

Jean Anouilh, being a Frenchman, is, in *The Lark**, able to take more liberties with the historical sources that did Bernard Shaw. After all Joan was French, and it is fitting that it should be a Frenchman who dispenses with the martyrdom and rates her achievements as higher than the "mystery" of her case, thus giving her story a happy ending. The play being made up of flashbacks on the

* *The Lark* has just been published in Christopher Fry's translation by Methuen and Co., Ltd. Price 8/6.

same stage presents problems to the producer which Hilton Edwards handled adequately; the final tableau achieving the demands of the author who asked for a beautiful illustration out of a school prize. Eithne Dunne gave a fine performance as Joan. It was difficult to decide whether she was more effective in her *gaminerie*, in her moments of high ecstasy, as a more than ordinary country girl communing with her "voices" or doggedly pursuing the purpose to which she had dedicated herself. Hilton Edwards' deliberate speech and imposing personality as Cauchon did much to relieve the monotony of the trial scene as did, likewise, Liam Gaffney in his role of Inquisitor which was even more fearsome than Shaw's creation. For once Micheal MacLiammoir overdressed and overplayed his part as the Earl of Warwick, flaming through his lines in a fulsome scarlet cloak (England's bloody red, perhaps). Milo O'Shea showed his versatility as the Dauphin for which he was admirably cast.

The night-club has disappeared from Dublin. At one time one could go to Madame Cogley's cabaret or to the Silver Slipper where there were intelligent floor-show performances (original sketches or ballet dancing) and where one met one's friends, talked and danced. All this, however, is in the distant past. London night-clubs have always been a mystery to me and were associated in my mind with low life or the covered playground of the leisured classes. A visit to the Café de Paris dispelled any delusions or illusions I may have had. Those present, both young and not so young, behaved with a perfect decorum, dancing with modest steps and never a jive or jitter to disturb the less than "hot" rhythm of the band. The main attraction was Hermione Gingold. She had succeeded Marlene Dietrich and far from endeavouring to exclude any comparison, began by imitating the mannerisms of her predecessor. Miss Gingold's act was rare in its mingled satire and gaiety. She must be among the very few artists who appeal to the intelligence, who sings songs that have sense and whose elocution does not sacrifice the words to the high note.

Art Notes

By Edward Sheehy.

PAINTINGS BY PAUL POUCHOL. The Victor Waddington Galleries.
RECENT PAINTINGS BY CAROLINE SCULLY. The Dublin Painters' Gallery.
SUNDAY PAINTERS. The Merrion Row Gallery.

Paul Pouchol, who is well known as a distinguished ceramist, as a painter fulfils all the claims made for him by Mr. Charles Sidney in his short introduction to the catalogue. Pouchol is certainly a painter who revives, or is it preserves the painterly virtues which succumbed in the first place to the disintegrating light of impressionism and were even more thoroughly bedevilled by the experimental aberrations of post-impressionism. Corot is confessedly his model and certainly, did one not know, one might easily place his work in time and spirit with that of such minor masters of landscape as Pissarro or Sisley.

Pouchol is, within his limits, a quiet perfectionist. But he is also an anachronism. Spiritually his work belongs to a period of established values, of leisure and civilisation. Mr. Sidney, with careful indirectness, implies that his work marks a return to pictorial sanity. But his arguments are, to my mind, based on the generally accepted fallacy that art is an autonomous activity, that all the unpleasantness of his so-called *Ecole de Buchenwald*, or all the mystification of abstraction, is a purely arbitrary departure from some established norm. The modern painter is the victim of confusion not, as the nostalgic critic would have it, its creator. And we can no more return to the conditions which produced 19th century French painting than we can revive the religious background of Giotto, or the rich humanist faith of Rembrandt.

I am not for the moment suggesting that Pouchol is a mere pasticheur. He paints with sincerity and conviction; but he has by some extraordinary feat of concentration succeeded in abstracting himself from the contemporary world of painting. He has elected, in no sentimental or shallow sense, to paint for pleasure. He takes an obvious delight in paint and in landscape and communicates that delight in most of his thirty-eight canvases here. Pictures like *Vetheuil, à l'Arbre, Seine et Oise*, or *Les Jardins, Vetheuil* have a delightful feeling of charm and intimacy, rare in painting to-day. *Le Hourdel (Bleu): Baît de la Somme*, is an example of the wonderful clarity of his seascapes. But practically all his work has this quiet and happy perfection. He is a happy painter, in love with his job: that is perhaps why he is such a startling phenomenon in our day.

On paper the idea of a gallery devoted solely to the work of Sunday painters is excellent and the enterprise of Mr. Leslie C. Brooks in making the small Merrion Row Gallery available for such an exhibition every month, one to be commended. This first December exhibition illustrates the limitations of such an idea. The Sunday painter, or to use Mr. Brook's own phrase, the "painter for pleasure", is almost invariably an academic camp-follower who uses paint inexpertly and sloppily to produce quite worthless imitations of the dreariest academic clichés. The term Sunday painters suggests the primitive; but visitors to the exhibition with this in mind will be disappointed for his exhibition, at varying distances, follows academic modes. Perhaps this is just as well, for the innocence of the genuine primitive is rare, rarer even than the conscious art of cultivated genius. There was only one Ronsseau among a host of contemporaries.

But while most of the exhibits are, not unexpectedly, amateurish, some few show considerable competence, and at least one definite promise. W. G. Spencer's water-colour *Saw Mills* is well painted and well constructed, making quite a pleasant picture. E. M. Verschoyle-Campbell's *Dahli Lake, Kashmir* and *Hindu Temple, Kashmir* have both grace and delicacy in their somewhat old-fashioned mood of lyrical Romanticism. Margaret Bergen's *Still Life* in oil, though somewhat over simplified, shows a nice feeling for texture and formal values. But of all the pictures at the show Muriel Jason's water-colour, *Rough Sea, Kilkee*, was outstanding in the daring richness of its colour and the verve of its painting. I should say that here is a painter of promise and I should like to see more of her work.

This is the first time I have seen Caroline Scully's work in bulk, and the effect, if one can escape the suspicion that the gloomy palette affected by many of our contemporary women painters is not an easy means to a kind of portentous solemnity, quite impressive, if a little overwhelming in its insistence on Romantic gloom. Within this convention her work is consistent and at its most successful, as in *Lock House*, has something of the dramatic impact of the work of Vlaminck. I liked also *Mills*, *Graiguenamanagh*, for its excellent and imaginative colour and *Dunquin Harbour* where she fully captures the gloomy grandeur of the place. Two flower studies, which belong, I think to her earlier work, have an impressionistic richness and warmth which I find attractive.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE VITAL CYCLE.

ICON AND IDEA. The Function of Art in the Development of Human Consciousness. By Herbert Read (pp. 152). Faber and Faber. 42/-.

At the end of a recent essay Susanne Langer wrote "Every great historic age takes its rise from some new feeling, some new sense of reality; and that feeling finds its formulation and embodiment in art." Earlier writers such as Schelling, Schiller, Goethe, Hölderlin and more positively the aesthetician Conrad Fiedler had advanced (Dr. Read informs us) without systematised support the belief that from the embodiment in art of such feelings or intuitions of a new aspect of reality are developed the subsequent abstractions, the ideas which when systematised in logical terms lead to religion and the sciences. During each cultural cycle, art is the instrument of advance; first is the image, then the idea; the rationalisation of the idea produces a system of ideas, and society develops along lines to some extent predictable; depending on knowledge of the environmental stresses.

What is, in fact, being said here is that ideas can only rise from experience, they cannot spontaneously produce themselves; before the idea some principle of feeling must have externalised itself in an image or symbol of itself. Does the image precede the abstraction, the thing without associative vibration beyond itself? This seems undoubtedly so in the psychology of the individual consciousness, and this in microcosm is the principle of Sir Herbert Read's new theory of art. It is the culmination of a phase in modern aesthetics which began with an increase in the understanding of Paleolithic and Neolithic cave drawings, reflecting the growing dissatisfaction of psychologists, anthropologists, and others with the concept of art as an adjunct to life rather than the very principle of its progression, "the spearhead", as Susanne Langer puts it in the same essay quoted above, "of every cultural advance".

If accepted, this theory will, as Dr. Read points out in his preface, necessitate a reinterpretation of cultural history, a re-examination of basic philosophical postulates, and (more practically) a profound alteration in educational systems. It is, of course, an immense claim—one which is implicit in phases of past aesthetic

thought, but which has never been pinned down and examined before. In this considerable task Dr. Read's instruments are, as usual, Jungian psychology, anthropology, the metaphysics of Bergson, the work of such aestheticians as Cassirer and Collingwood.

Dr. Read applies his theory to broadly sequential epochs, beginning with the earliest known. In the single direct perceptive image of the Paleolithic cave drawings he finds a principle of *vitality*, depending on an almost reflex externalisation of a perceptual image held in the memory. Moving to the succeeding geometric art of the Neolithic, he interprets it not as a contraction of visual experience as have most authorities, but as an expansion of consciousness into abstract symbolism, showing for the first time an awareness of aesthetically pleasing inter-relations of forms. In this inter-relationship and pattern he finds his principle of *harmony*. The actual cause of the supercession of the Paleolithic is sought logically in environmental changes—the key to all sociological mutation.

In one direction, the development of Neolithic geometric art results in the early Greek civilisation which, abstracting from it principles of proportion and number, began to apply these principles to the human form—the vital image. The Greeks were thus the first civilisation to metamorphose the two dimensional with an artistic intuition of limited three-dimensional space. This balance of vitalism (the human form as percept) and harmony (abstract geometric inter-relations) resulted in Greek classical art—a limited humanism, from which in turn a clearer ideal crystallised.

In another direction, as the Neolithic culture advanced, inter-related ritual and art evolved, religion succeeded magic, the mere association of unalterable events gave way to belief in a transcendental control. This change is due in Sir Herbert's opinion, to the dissociation of the elements of ritual into the transcendental unknown and the image, the way for the former being prepared by "the concept (of space) read into the realised symbol", the symbol being the embodiment of an intuition of space. With the increasing development of feeling and consequent idea, space in art reached its highest manifestation in the medieval Gothic cathedrals—the infinite as opposed to the limited conception of the Greeks.

The next epoch for examination is the Renaissance, beginning with the discovery of an objective reality existing in nature, and the revelation in plastic terms of this perceptual reality. The confusion of the *sensation* and the *idea* of space, resulting in scientific principles of representation, led to the academism which follows divorce of symbol and sensation. This academism directed the main stream of European art into the cul-de-sac of representation ending in the nineteenth century. Appropriately, Sir Herbert called this chapter "The Illusion of the Real".

Renaissance humanism also held within it—to a mind which had realised the illusion of formulae in the representation of an external reality residing in nature—the possibility of investigating another reality, that of the Self; the fluid, teeming, image-exchange below the threshold of consciousness, possessing its own dynamism and structure. This subjective universe was most completely externalised in the work of Paul Klee.

The possible esoterism of an involuntary subjective world thus revealed lies in that it lacks the reference to an impersonal objective absolute. This is

the term of reference which the Constructivists—names such as Gabo, Pevsner, Mondrian—have endeavoured to form; in symbols arising from the modern environment of atoms, electricity and tension, in a fluctuant mathematical cosmos. These images, structurally interpenetrated with the age, embody intuitions which adumbrate its development and direction. From them Sir Herbert endeavours to crystallise some idea of the new epoch. With respect to his theory, his own writing here is an unconscious proof—the ideas he gains from pictorial intuitivity tumble in his pages like rare captured fish.

For the most part Sir Herbert's theory clicks along like clockwork, and he changes gears (as it were) with considerable skill. At times, however, one can sense a slight grating: In his dismissal of the Byzantine mosaic; during the difficult change from Roman classicism to Christian transcendentalism; in dealing with the divarication of image and idea effected by science and philosophy.

This last phenomenon has led, of course, to a separate life of ideas—developing one from the other in chains of thought. Does not a reversal of Sir Herbert's theory then become possible, the idea affecting the image? Although the unconscious was the subject of investigation in art long before Freud, did not the development of modern psychology result in the incarnation in art of ideas thus revealed? In the development of modern art both processes may have been at work in a complicated interplay. But at his best, however, (e.g. the change from Neolithic to Greek) he carries one along in a quick rush of certainty.

Sir Herbert's manner of inquiry is essentially modern—intellectual analysis in the light of modern sciences; psychology, anthropology, philosophy. His learning is, as always, immense but mobile. His belief in art gives him a freedom in dealing with it which prevents what he himself would call the corruption of critical consciousness, resulting in mere intellectual juggling. Not least in importance is the comparative clarity of his prose; the style is pared to the bone, and he makes things as simple as they can be made in dealing with his difficult ideas. His intellect is so tempered that it functions as surely and delicately as a needle rising and falling against a graph.

Since the war visual art has inspired three important books: Maritain's 'Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry' revealed the scholastic's interpretation of art; Malraux's 'Voices of Silence' is the humanist's interpretation; Susanne Langer's 'Feeling and Form' the modern rationalist philosopher's. Perhaps this short book is most purely the production of the art critic as such, using and not being used by his instruments of science. It is an important creative achievement.

BRIAN O'DOHERTY

TO BE—OR NOT TO BE

JOURNEY THROUGH DREAD: A Study of Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Sartre. By Arland Ussher. Darwen and Finlayson. 8s. 6d.

To many people Existentialism is but a vague, irritatingly undefined term. The irritation arises because of the difficulty experienced in pinning anyone down

to a succinct definition which would explain it, and its significance for our time and age.

This is not due to any esotericism on the part of those "in the know". To be asked to give a short definition of Existentialism, is like being asked to describe, without gestures, a spiral staircase. Words flounder, and actions more nearly convey its essence (if one dare use a word to which the Existentialists have given such significance). When initiation has taken place, the initiate not unfrequently feels the same sense of surprise as did M. Jourdain when he discovered he had been talking prose all his life.

Mr. Arland Ussher's brilliant study of three of the most famous people in Existential literature—Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Sartre is addressed to those with some background of philosophical knowledge. He calls it a personal voyage of discovery and shows himself an informal logician in so far as he is content for the most part to describe the procedures that are followed. In saying that Existentialism is not a philosophy for all time, but may be appropriate for a time of transition, he calls to mind F. C. S. Schuller's dictum, "Every truth has its day, like every dog, but sufficient unto the day is the truth thereof."

In each of these three studies his aim is to reveal to us "the shudder of a man, naked, solitary, and bewildered before his last ditch." The cries of torment we are permitted to hear cannot fail to arrest our attention—even where they fail to win our sympathy.

Despite an avowal that he found each of the three personally challenging and moving, it is apparent at the outset that Kierkegaard failed to win Mr. Ussher's sympathy. In the section set aside for a study of Kierkegaard, Mr. Ussher says it is impossible to understand him unless we first understand and do justice to Hegel. Whereupon he sets about doing justice to Hegel with such thoroughness that he does an injustice to Kierkegaard, whose sole importance, we might be led to believe, lies chiefly in his being the first to tilt at the Hegelian windmill. This failure, to grasp the greatness and significance of this whale among the Existentialist fry that spawned on him, detracts somewhat from the book.

In this sinning—if sin it be—Mr. Ussher can console himself that he is but one of a large company. The things Kierkegaard fought against in his day were only there by implication, and what he said to his contemporaries was said over their heads to us, as Dr. Hohlenberg points out in his fine study of him. Yet there are curiously few attentive ears even today, on this the hundredth anniversary of his death (11th November, 1855). His is still a voice crying in the wilderness. He is known as the Father of Modern Existentialism. He would in truth need to be a wise father to recognize his sons in Heidegger and Sartre, but with that amazing prescience found throughout his writings he wrote in his journal in November, 1836, "In my opinion, every development ends in a parody of itself."

It does not fall within the scope of this review to enquire how it is that today it is the lesser prophets who make the headlines. Suffice to say that there almost appears to have been a conspiracy of silence, where one would have expected to find at least some disciples, namely among the theologians and the parsons.

This man—who a century ago said that Christianity had been made too much into a consolation, so that people had forgotten it was a demand; this man, who alone in his generation, dared to call for fewer Christians and emptier

churches ; for a cleansing of the Augean stable called Christendom, as a prelude to a return to true Christianity ; who foretold the future in these words, " There will be a frightful reformation compared with which the Lutheran reformation will be almost a joke . . . millions will fall away from Christianity . . . for it really no longer exists, and those who have been molly-coddled into thinking themselves Christians, must receive the death blow of learning once again what it means to be a Christian." This man speaks too plainly. He is an uncomfortable prophet. The prelates prefer Billy Graham ; others prefer the stoical attempts of Heidegger and Sartre to divorce God, and work things out for themselves. *Chacun a son goût*. The reviewer would not exchange the wisdom of Kierkegaard's Journals for all the literary outpourings of his successors. Mr. Ussher seems to find Heidegger and Sartre more congenial company. He analyses them and writes of them with brilliant imagery and penetration, which more than offsets his irritating over-use of parentheses.

Out of this Existential hot-pot he has culled a little elixir for himself—labelled " artistic intuition ", " a sort of physical tact ". From this he hopes to further distil a tiny gleam of hope called " poetic apprehension ", which he intends to hand over to the artist. " The world is still outside us for the winning. The artist in my belief must be called in aid, where the doctors admit defeat."

Mr. Ussher states that his interest in Existentialism does not stem from mere-modishness—but because it might contain some novel truth—or an old truth adapted to new circumstances. This cautious attitude almost merits Kierkegaard's castigation of the " docent " as " a professor of the fact that another has suffered ",—calling up, as it does, a picture of a feeble-voiced spectator cheering mildly on the side lines of life, and does not do justice to Mr. Ussher's recognized intellectual vigour.

With all their faults, these three have written with their heart's blood. Mr. Ussher has found them " moving and challenging " and has written a book which in turn will challenge and provoke the reader, and leave him ruminating on this intellectual feast so skilfully pre-digested for him.

C. L. McCLENAGHAN.

ARTICULATE SYNTAX. By Donald Davie. Routledge and Keegan Paul. 18s.

Dr. Davie's inquiry into the vehicular nature of syntax in the making of poems brings into one handy book the conclusions of such major people as T. E. Hulme, Fenollosa, Valéry, Yeats, Bishop Berkeley, and refers especially to a notable essay, *Philosophy in a New Key*, by Susanne Langer. I need not say that the main contribution, brought about as it is by his examination of others, is by Dr. Davie himself, who brings to this task not only the understanding of a working craftsman, which is instinctive to any good artist, but the enlarged consciousness of the scholar who has brought too his intelligence of many other fields into the analysis.

Syntax for Dr. Davie has little of its prose implications. It is not the structure that holds the simple sense, not the architecture of the sentence that conveys meaning formally in the preconceptions of grammar. Words in themselves are meanings in motion that change their planes in their relations to other words..

They have a group accuracy in poetry in addition to their first unfabulous meanings, whereas in prose that concrete and visual first meaning has become dulled by ill-usage, and the word dies in the auras of abstractions it develops in time. So syntax to T. E. Hulme became the prose way of using words, and in the end he would have none of it at all. He would have his poetry walk naked.

Fenollosa, used so much by Ezra Pound, argued contrarily, observing that in the construction of the first primitive sentence resided all the nature of man, that "there is no disharmony between man and the outside world," that "they are both on the same level, on which man feels himself one with nature." To Fenollosa things were energies, as Dr. Davie says, always on the move, transmitting or receiving currents of force, and hence, since things have in words the emotional bodies man has invented for them, words require the primitive syntax out of which they came.

Mrs. Langer trolls with neither. For her, even where there is formal prose syntax to a poem, it is merely a façade for the pseudo-syntax in which the poem lives its own life without strait-jacket. What she says of a piece of music she applies to poetry. Neither expresses an emotion; "what music can actually reflect is only the morphology of feeling," not this feeling or that (though this one and that may swim up for an instant now here, now there), but feeling in itself, its structure, as Dr. Davie enlarges: "its burden is, in very naïve phrase, a knowledge of how feelings go. And it is in presenting how feelings are built up, how they branch and fork and coalesce, that we find the articulating back and forth that is music's life." To quote Dr. Davie's extract from Mrs. Langer: "Articulation is its life, but not assertion; expressiveness but not expression. The actual function of meaning, which calls for permanent contents, is not fulfilled; for the assignment of one rather than another possible meaning to each form is never explicitly made."

From those three differing bases, Dr. Davie examines many types of poem. The most enlightening, I think, is Fenellosa on Shakespeare, the emphasis on the transitive that opens all the vowels of power in the English tongue, but Dr. Davie himself, in examining the various devices of the poets illustrates, I think, more than any other the secret hinges on which poems turn. I am very glad, personally, to have this book. As a poet I shall have, after reading it, a little more method in my madness.

But, personally, I believe that syntax is gesticulation and that a true poem is the one that moves you from everywhere into the nowhere of itself. Man and poem are one while the poet makes—or is made into—this impermanently permanent body, and when all is said and done, a poem is nothing but the gesticulation of that new body. The poet is only there to give his blood-heat, what Dr. Davie calls "the reek of the human," the element that has a heartbeat in its head. Syntax, finally, in Dr. Davie's opinion, is the human relationship between the poet and the poem, and that poetry to be great must reek of the human. In other words, there is no pure syntax, and no condition of pure music such as the symbolists aimed at in the terms of Mallarmé. There is only a man turning himself into his own words, naming himself as once he named fabulously the objects around him, each a power and a use, each a piece of the earth and a portion of himself, and each the beginning of a train of thought or the stepping stones in a reverie that led him onto some final startling full stop.

THE WHISPERING GALLERY. Autobiography, Vol. I. By John Lehmann. Longmans. 21s.

If the English Tory is the finest creation of Mammon, the English Liberal, even in those one-traffic days of Socialism, is not to be dismissed because of all the good works left undone and all the profits left unshared. There was somewhere within the stocks and shares and the overworked factories a social conscience at work, paternal certainly and of no major consequence in Parliament but a conscience that for its day was advanced enough and vocal enough also to say its say. It belonged, of course, to a minority, and I suppose its function, apart from the minor reforms it effected in the evolution of the proletariat, was that it did serve as a public conscience for the whole, and so served the psychological purpose of draining away any feeling of guilt the wealthier classes might have towards their possessions.

But when the liberal party cracked before the surge of the socialists it had fostered in its shadow, and when wars and dictators unbalanced the social equation of more decent days, young men of the more notable liberal families, such as Mr. Lehmann, intelligent and definitely committed by inheritance to a practical interest in public affairs, found themselves out on a limb. In a time of reaction they had no party to serve, in an era in which all the decencies were overwhelmed one after the other, they found in England no political party with a leadership strong enough to gather up the people to face the inevitable war on their liberties and on those very laws through which they were evolving towards the socialist state, none, that is except the clamant Communists, a party which certainly at that time and by force of necessity, served to focus the opposition to the new fascist state.

I think it can be said that the best type of individual in the Thirties was, in fact, a fellow-traveller ; and Mr. Lehmann's tale of his time is that of a sensitive conscience seeking for itself that course of action in which he could absolve himself of the guilt of his age by making himself useful in the only way available to him. At the time of European crisis he found himself in city after city when the Jackboot came trampling in, not doing very much about it either way, since there was nothing he could do, but he did at least make the major offering of himself and his talents, that final commitment to the idea which enables a man to live at some peace with himself. That is what matters to any person.

And in his own way, too, Mr. Lehmann rates as a person of importance ; not, oddly, as the poet he is, though he is distinguished as a poet ; and not as a novelist and prose-writer, though as a proseman he is excellent in the minor keys ; but rather as a type-figure of the Thirties, the Litterateur finding a focus in the political scene, the poet turned editor, the privileged boy seeking his antithesis in working-class youth, the talent scout of the masses, advancing the liberal conscience by that other step which is vital to itself if it is to survive in this modern world and still retain its value and its values. If his literary talent in its divergencies is not as outstanding in verse as Auden's, or as Isherwood's in prose, or if he has not contributed to the social thing as largely as George Orwell, nevertheless in his combination he has been as effective as they, and enters too into the history.

This book is not remarkable for its portraiture. The acids are not enough. The opening piece with its evocations of childhood, a kind of family album, is rich with period and place and as dreamy as the great riverside where he lived, but the man has not remembered enough—which is all—of the boy; and of the other lives which touched on his, even within the family, the vital psychological shapes escape. His sisters are there, indeed another galaxy almost Sitwellian, but we should like to pry more into the genius of this Beatrix and Rosamund Lehmann in the tomboy ages of the talent, and much more of the mother should have come through, at least in her impact on the writer who is her son. Those, however, are the snags in most autobiography. The privacies necessary to family close up the right-of-way.

And the writer himself? Eton, Cambridge, and not too complicated, effective in what he touches, what comes through is a certain solidity of purpose and a wide aspiration. I suspect that his enthusiasms are not at all damped by his experiences in the great background of things; he has merely transferred himself from party to mankind, and now in Literature finds there is action enough for one lifetime.

EXPERIMENT IN ERROR. Poems. By Blanaid Salkeld. The Hand and Flower Press. Aldington, Kent. 7s. 6d.

The poet of our day is bedevilled by critics who, like the talmudical schools of old, some with a squint and some with an acrostic, continually miss the wood for the trees. Suffering most from the antics of these Sanhedrin, are the lone-wolf poets who are temperamentally allergic to pack law or utterly indifferent to capricious tribe, coterie, collective. It is the younger minds which are in this way diverted, which is indeed a pity because of what they are made to miss.

In so pundit-riddled a world the still flame of poetry, neglected by votive hands or buffeted by the howling gusts of academic criticism, finds it an effort to keep burning. For all that, poetry's light breaks through chinks in the schoolmen's cubbyholes and, when this happens, the fusty theses, rhymed and unrhymed alike, recede into the shadows.

An event like a new book of poems by Blanaid Salkeld sheds a brightness of this quality. Readers of this magazine have for many years known her to be a born poet. In a period when verse is all chromium and suede, her self-expression is true-grained and clean-woven. Where poets too often fob us off with 'concrete' music for tonality, hers is a truly contemporary melody. Where diatribe and cavilling are the fashion she sings, or soliloquises, with an impressive discipline. These thoughts are prompted by the publication of her 5th collection of poems.

The first volume, *Hello, Eternity* (1933), showed this writer to have a vibrant lyrical sense, controlled by a metaphysical turn of mind. Two years later, there followed *The Fox's Covert*, which revealed another facet in her creative growth, a strong earthy allegiance which her residing and working in Ireland, undoubtedly enriched. In 1937, she as so many poets of that decade, became receptive to the sound-waves of Modernism, then permeating the poetic ether. Nevertheless, in her book, *the engine is left running*, its quiet melancholy tuned to a minor key, saved her work from the politico-social death-wish which has since engulfed the then Auden-Spender disciples.

Parallel with these collections she had been writing verse-plays of various lengths. All original, proving that from the point where Synge and Yeats left off, and where Austin Clarke still triumphs, poetic energy exists, although present-day audiences in Ireland seem to be too small to encourage publishers.

Well might the author have cried with some justification. 'What boots it with incessant care to tend the slighted shepherd's trade . . . ?' Abandonment, however, is foreign to her Muse and now, in her seventy-fifth year, we welcome a collection which crowns this remarkable poet's steady growth, her intense devotion to her art.

Experiment in Error is pervaded by a philosophical calm—the certainty of being uncertain. The poet is "not yet delivered of the past" . . .

So I must smile and peer

Into the forward mists, ahead of fear.

Retrace my steps—who have no time to waste?

Because for her,

The meddling sun's warm curiosity

Few will resent.

He has his long finger in every pie—

even the theme of *Getting Ill* evokes a Proustian awareness and a lyric mood :—

Yet illness can be a sort of vacation from life :

Objects crowd in upon the weary senses : a knife

Stiffens on the table : the walls with their pictures dangling

Advance on our indifference ; thought has done with angling :

Nothingness burgeons

Though every lyric is tingling with a nuance or a surprise,

Who comes, who crosses,

With freight of early music, to quiet

Ocean that tosses

And the bleak upland where winds make riot?

it is through her command of the sonnet-form that we are shown her finest mettle. Rarely has one experienced in modern poetry since we had John Gawsworth's achievements in the early 'thirties such flexibility and virtuosity in sonnet-writing. Blanaid Salkeld's is a cantering rhythm, not 'Sprung' in the Hopkins manner, but reined and guided by the rider's changing energies :—

I will follow the silver springing wave,

Releasing my cramped spirit to its motion

becomes in the very next sonnet transmuted into exuberance :

Madness is acceptable—in excess

No trans-reason peckings here and there . . .

Until the black-out and that alibi

Of a pretended marriage with the dust.

Assonantal beauty pervades many passages, such as this—from *Miranda* :—

Strange word, defeat . . . She has not grace to quake

Before bright shapes the pitiless demons take

To dare and dazzle, as they crow and scoff.

So let us pray against our sorrowing selves.

Lines at times will linger in the memory hauntingly :—

*Vain images, images that waylay
The good procession—*

or,

from the Sonnet *Joy, that can claim no cousinship with day;
entitled Interference.*

*I am become tired warder of the days : . . .
Since I prolong time's wrong,*

is the poet's clinical self-realisation that she is moving towards an ultimate acceptance of life's paradoxes. Yet, remembrance of past ecstasies impinges, when :

*She who has seen dawn's blush on Everest
Or, with a barbary pack and coolie train
Beaten the jackal from the sugar-cane . . .
Is lodged now, lowly as this fieldmice nest.*

Dawn over Everest is a bridge-image spanning with lyrics and sonnets, the single, much longer, poem, *The Woman Gardener*. The latter springs from her childhood spent in Chittagong. (She met Tagore in India when she was only twelve.) Whereas the reader will readily succumb to its sensuous appeal and rich Oriental embroideries, a knowledge of the background to the poem would possibly help to elucidate for the European mind the imagery of Hindu mysticism and legend.

Metaphysical wrestling, wry humour, self-awareness of a highly developed kind—all are present in this, the most climactic of Blanaid Salkeld's writings to date. Echoes, somehow, continue, after one has put the book down—a good sign that her latest poetry will endure.

*Not the loud train
Praises the bright, bright girls with the fine
Curtains of rain
Blowing about them, along the line
Nor any message of the heaven's surrender
To the low, far
Hills sloping, in pelican homage —
As on an altar
Piling sacrifice of their plumage
It takes discernment
Of the human heart, in discipline
Of will's internment
To surmise lightnings of the divine.*

Indeed, as I hinted earlier—"it takes discernment"!

L. H. D.

MAN ON HIS PAST. The Study of the History of Historical Scholarship. By Herbert Butterfield. Cambridge University Press. 22s. 6d.

The first lectures at the Queen's University of Belfast under the Wiles Trust were delivered in November, 1954 by Professor H. Butterfield. He chose for his subject the history of historiography, treating it as 'a subsection in the history of science'.

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Man on His Past gives a fascinating account of the first tentative developments ; and of the labours of the university of Göttingen as its professors became increasingly convinced that the historian must take into account the other sciences, and all the circumstances, however remote, which shape historical patterns. Two men deeply influenced by the Göttingen outlook were Acton and Ranke, and Professor Butterfield illuminatingly surveys their achievements and technique, the scope of their enquiries, the moral issues as they saw them, and also their limitations. As both have suffered from imperceptive criticism, this fresh assessment is of particular interest. Certain historical episodes are then examined to illustrate the various ways of approach to the history of historiography, and to demonstrate its objectives and treatment.

"The division of history into periods would hardly be important as an issue if we were not liable to become the slaves of our system, liable to forget how much of convention has entered into the dating of the epochs and the fixing of the labels . . . The framework that we give to the events of the past often becomes a harder form of knowledge than anything else ; so that, for many people, the Renaissance becomes a 'thing' as firm as a battle or a bench, and even stands in history as the cause of causes. In these circumstances it is possible to imagine that we have explained something when we have said that it is due to the Renaissance. The history of historiography serves at least to make our concepts fluid again."

These lectures, here published with many notes and appendices, are an eloquent tribute to the value of the Wiles Trust whose purpose is "to promote the study of the history of civilisation and to encourage the extension of historical thinking into the realm of general ideas."

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU. A Critical Study of his Life and Writings. By F. C. Green. Cambridge University Press. 27s. 6d.

David Hume, whose acquaintance with Rousseau began when the persecution mania was already painfully obvious, said of him : "He has only felt, during the whole course of his life. He is like a man who was stript not only of his clothes, but of his skin, and turned out in that situation to combat with the rude and boisterous elements." The poignancy of that evening when Rousseau and Hume sat by the fireside in London, the former desperately, vainly, trying to believe in the other's integrity and affection, is increased when one recollects that so soon afterwards his erstwhile friends Diderot, Grimm and Mme d'Epainay were to enact a treachery as ugly as any his sick mind had fancied. As Professor Green comments: "The 'editing' of Mme d'Epainay's pseudo-memoirs was so expertly carried out that for over eighty years their appalling portrait of Jean-Jacques was accepted as genuine by most historians and critics."

In reading this brilliant study of Rousseau and his writings, his own dictum—"Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains"—has a particular relevance for neither his past nor his temperament allowed him freedom. There are, for example the pages in *Emile* which owe more to the experiences of his own precocious, hypersensitive, undisciplined youth than to a balanced consideration of educational problems. His greatest ideas are here admirably summarised, the ideas that have "revolutionised modern education":

"All education must be based on an experimental knowledge of child psychology. The child's view of the external world is quite different from that of the teacher. There are various distinct phases in the development of the childish mind and these must condition the various stages of his education. . . . The object of education is not primarily vocational. It is not as Rousseau said, to produce a magistrate, a soldier or a priest, but a man. And a well educated man is he who is best equipped 'to bear the fortunes and misfortunes of life.' Was it not the Danish philosopher Höffding who remarked that *Emile* is the Magna Carta of all children? Could any man possibly wish for a more splendid epitaph?"

Yet Rousseau's obsessive brooding on the upbringing that he believed would have fortified him against the growing pains of genius in contact with the world did propose an unnatural environment for the natural child; and neither his interpretation of biological law nor the circumstances of his life suggest that in practice he would have been an entirely adequate teacher.

The chains are also obvious when he is considered as an artist. *La Nouvelle Héloïse* has for us "the peculiar fascination, not of a great novel, but of a veiled autobiography whose disclosures are all the more illuminating because they are involuntary." Professor Green caustically describes that intolerable heroine: "Physically, as the author frequently reminds us, Julie is lavishly feminine. Psychologically, she is a kind of monster, combining the sentimentality of a village Gretchen, the sexual wisdom of a midwife, the austerity of a Cato, the pedantry of a blue-stocking, the virtuousness of an elderly prude and, on occasion, the analytic powers of a delicate psychologist. The only quality Julie lacks is simplicity, a defect shared by Claire, Wolmar and Bomston." This inevitable revulsion is not, however, permitted to blur a sensitive perception of the novel's actual merits, or of its fulfilment of Rousseau's emotional needs.

An American critic has recently reminded us that prejudice—chiefly religious—has been responsible for the erroneous belief that he was an immoralist in his political writings, while, in fact, he is "one of the most stimulating and controversial of political theorists." Professor Green's examination does full justice to Rousseau's genius and to what is memorable and still persuasive in his works; and his portrait of the man and his background is detailed, penetrating and richly alive.

L. H.

LIVING AND KNOWING. By E. W. F. Tomlin. Faber and Faber. 25s.

Living and Knowing is a contribution towards what another philosopher has called 'the ultimate fusion of metaphysical and scientific thinking'.

"The problem is to discover and explain how we, as organisms, enjoy contact and communion not merely with an *Umwelt*, a natural environment, but with something else which is equally an environment, namely a realm of ideas, essences, and values. . . . Our aim, then will be to show that 'metaphysical' reality, if it exists at all, must have its roots in organic nature."

Mr. Tomlin, in a brief, but far from superficial survey of the main trends of philosophical thought, suggests that the neglect of any adequate examination of the relation between man's organic and his spiritual nature is due to a mistrust—and a misunderstanding—of metaphysics. He prefers, therefore, to use the

term 'metabiology'; and, to explain the speculations of some recent European writers (Max Scheler, Raymond Ruyer, Simone Weil, among others), he reviews the development in man's view of nature, the consequences of a shift of interest from 'ends' to 'means', the contradictory positions for which the theory of evolution has been evoked, its main interpretations and adaptations, and such controversies as that of the Mechanists and Vitalists. "Like the later idea of Relativity, Evolution had become a kind of intellectual paddock within which common notions, wandering about aimlessly, were conveniently rounded up."

From the need to co-ordinate the research of biologists and psychologists, has come the science of psycho-biology, and the possibility of liquidating "the concept of life as a process of blind autonomy intervening between matter and mind". Mr. Tomlin's outline of this new science, and the developments it adumbrates, is profoundly stimulating. His central theme, "the identification of life and consciousness, and the necessity of acknowledging a realm of absolute values", is treated lucidly and with a just appreciation of the implications of recent scientific and philosophical theories.

Two extracts may serve to indicate some of the conclusions of a cogent and notable book.

"To say that man is 'composed' of body and mind is perhaps to say something that could not be said otherwise without appearing to fall into two alternative errors: the error of pure materialism and the error of pure spiritualism. Whatever man may be, he is neither pure corporeality nor pure spirituality . . . Instead of being composed of two or more elements, he is 'the composing'. He exists to the full in so far as he transcends his bio-psychic nature . . . There is a human race, a predatory breed of clever animals; there are comparatively few human beings."

"That which is known as life at the organic level and spirit at the super-organic level is merely consciousness becoming increasingly articulate, awake, and enlightened . . . Personality not merely possesses an intuitive grasp of values. In certain circumstances it may come to possess a knowledge of Value itself, the supreme Value or Value of Values, which religion defines as God."

L. H.

THE LETTERS OF JOHN OF SALISBURY. Volume One. The Early Letters (1153-1161). Edited by W. J. Millor, S.J. and H. E. Butler. Revised by C. N. L. Brooke. Nelson's Medieval Texts. 50s.

If the *Policraticus*, which had in its time so much influence, is now left to the student of medieval political thought, its author, John of Salisbury, remains, as an early humanist, one of the most attractive figures of the twelfth century. This first volume of his letters, finely translated and with the Latin text, contains those written up to the death of his patron Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, in 1161; the subsequent volumes will deal with those that date from the accession of Thomas Becket, Theobald's successor. Many of them were written for the archbishop, and most of them discuss a wide range of official matters; yet they are, as is stressed here, less the letters of a jurist than of a man who was intensely

practical in his attitude to administrative and other problems. His legal knowledge was considerable, but he was always delightfully tempted by classical parallels and ornament.

The lengthy, and wholly admirable, introduction relates what is known of his life: his birth at Old Salisbury about 1115-20, his education at Chartres, early poverty, career as secretary to Theobald (his testimonial coming from from St. Bernard of Clairvaux), ambassador to Rome, and bishop of Chartres. "John's literary culture derived from Chartres, and . . . his experience as an administrator was gained in the papal Curia. Both these facts . . . are fundamental for an understanding of John of Salisbury's achievement and career . . . his works reveal themselves as the finest monument of the literary and humanistic culture" of Chartres. He was profoundly interested in the new ideas and movements of his day, knew many notable men, and was a sensitive observer with a lively eye for the characteristic or dramatic gesture.

"Essentially his protest was that of the man who believes in breadth of understanding rather than in depth of specialised study; his plea was against specialisation of any kind. In that sense he was a liberal person . . . (but) he was a man of strong faith and solid principles, rigidly orthodox and a convinced adherent of the papacy . . . John's works are a museum of matter ancient and modern; full of charming portraits and landscapes, rich in ideas, but cluttered with junk and only slightly organised. It has all the literary artistry of which a medieval humanist was capable—a rich and elegant Latin style, pungent thought and lucid illustration, a fund of interesting stories and exempla. One thing he lacked: the capacity to write a book."

The labours of the editors, Dr. W. J. Millor, S.J. and Professor H. E. Butler, and after the latter's death, of Mr. C. N. L. Brooke, have produced an invaluable and most distinguished volume.

L. H.

WILLIAM WESTON. *The Autobiography of an Elizabethan*. Translated from the Latin by Philip Caraman. With a Foreword by Evelyn Waugh. Longmans. 18s.

Father Caraman, whose recent translation of the autobiography of John Gerard aroused much interest, has now translated from the transcript preserved at Rome, the autobiography of another well-known contemporary Jesuit, William Weston. Both men were to arrive in England secretly, to carry out their mission with much success, and to suffer severe hardships and imprisonment with exemplary courage.

Mr. Evelyn Waugh suggests: "With Gerard we were reading Buchan. Here it is Bernanos; one the unambiguous man of action; the other the mystic beset with the mystic's devils, drawn to the desperate"—which is surely to misinterpret a deeply religious man but of an orthodox pattern in his faith. Fr. Caraman shows more discernment.

"On my first reading of the *Autobiography*, I was left with the impression that Fr. Weston was a man to be pitied, undoubtedly very pious, perhaps obstinate, credulous to a point that seemed to impair the value of his word for the historian."

He explains, however, that further study made him realise that apology was unnecessary. The stories related vividly, and naïvely, by Weston "are now recognisable as common types of hysteria; and so far from diminishing the worth of his testimony, enhance it. In fact, more than any other feature of Weston's *Autobiography*, these stories illustrate in an intimate manner the mental agony endured by men and women who accepted the change of religion against their conscience or the damage done by persecution to the normal working of men's minds." This explanation one accepts, but it is difficult to read with proper gravity passages like this:

"An almost similar incident I heard of concerned another person who kept his son, a priest, privately in his house against the danger of a sudden death. One day he left to go into a town nearby. There, just after he had heard an heretical sermon, he was seized suddenly with a fatal illness and fell down dead on the spot."

A rather odd note is struck by Mr. Evelyn Waugh in his foreword. Disregarding the assertions of the Elizabethan Jesuit, Robert Southwell, he writes: "It may seem to us now that for the fullest development of our national genius we required a third conquest, by Philip of Spain." The inference that the persecution of Protestants was meritorious is an unfortunate introduction to a fascinating book, edited with fine erudition.

L. H.

A CREED BEFORE THE CREEDS. By H. A. Blair. Longmans. 16s.

Canon Blair offers in his book the results of his search for the form of confession used by the Christian Church in the centuries before the Apostles' Creed took final shape.

"My purpose is to shew that there was in fact such a creed in the early Church and that it survived until well into the second century. Its pattern is seen in the New Testament and the early writings: it is both positive and relevant. It is centred on Christ and covers the great doctrines which belong to Christianity and no other religion: it is uncompromisingly supernatural, slightly cryptic in its terms, poetic in form: it is also curiously in tune with trends in present-day psychology, particularly that of Dr. C. G. Jung. There are answering echoes in primitive religion; there are prototypes of its pattern in the Old Testament and Rabbinic exposition. In it Christians confessed the Incarnation, the Atonement, the mastery of evil, the universal offer of security, the fulfilment of man's highest dreams."

This creed form he believes is given in the seven-line verse in 1 Timothy 3: 16 ("Certainly it seemed to summarize St. Paul—and, it gradually appeared, more than St. Paul; much New Testament doctrine was implicit in its antiphonal clauses."), and traces its history through successive phases: its oral use in Asia Minor and the East till about A.D. 150; its avoidance between A.D. 175 and 325; its later quotation and exposition by the early Fathers and others. The *homologia* pattern as it appears, sometimes in part or allusively, in the Bible and in patristic writings is noted with care.

On occasion, the lay mind marvels at the certainty with which theologians treat of celestial events. On the subject of angelology, for example, Canon Blair

warns us: "All mythological truth is to be taken seriously, but not literally", and relates the 'principalities and powers' or 'guardians of the nations' to Dr. Jung's archetypes; but he would seem to believe also in the angelic rulers as entities of whom it can factually be stated: "Their rule is divinely commissioned, but they have exceeded their powers, or at least outstayed their appointed time." Again, what private revelations prompt such passages as: "In normal human beings the body alone is the effective instrument of power: even the mind is effective only through the brain, and every act of will becomes physical as soon as it emerges from the chrysalis of intention. Soul without body moves in its own pattern and cannot change it, because the link with God is snapped at death"—an odd commentary, in any case, on Omnipresence; or, "What exactly was Jesus doing during those forty days? There is no reason for not asking such a question, but it may be one which can be only symbolically answered. He was travelling very fast through time, until He reached the end of history itself: and at the end, the disciples were also transported for a moment not out of time but to the end of time." For time as it was understood biblically the symbol might have relevance, but one cannot say as much for modern astronomical time.

Theologians who today would come to terms with psychology and science must do more than tack them on to all the concepts that were valid for St. Paul's day. Probably more attention to the metaphysics of the East would help them in their dilemma. Canon Blair's study is, however, a scholarly work of more than historical interest.

L. H.

MIND AND BODY. A Short History of the Evolution of Medical Thought. By Pedro L. Estralgo. Foreword by E. B. Strauss, F.R.C.P. Translated from the Spanish by Aurelio M. Espinosa, Jr. London: Harvill. 12s. 6d. net.

The importance of psychotherapy and psychosomatic disease is well established today but the fact is not so well known that medical treatment has always been concerned with the mind as well as with the body of the patient. Apart from tracing this attitude from the earliest beginnings, Estralgo examines modern developments in psychology and medicine. Unfortunately the public seems unable to discriminate between true workers and the quacks and cranks. Many disorders which were formerly regarded as being organic are often psychological in origin; peptic ulcer and skin diseases are outstanding examples. The patient must consult a reliable physician who should be able to determine whether a disease is physical or psychological or whether both factors are present. Many of the ancient writers were of the opinion that disease was a punishment for sin and preached that a pure life resulted in a healthy body. In the *Plutus* of Aristophanes, Chremylus complains that a good doctor can not be found and adds that where there are no fees there is no skill but in the later Christian attitude towards the sick person, assistance was rendered without regard to social status and the masses were treated in the same manner as the wealthy. When the Pharisees were scandalised by the association of Jesus with publicans and sinners, Jesus replies "They that are in health need not a physician but they that are ill." Nowadays all who are sick can obtain the best medical advice. The foundation of hospitals was a part of this activity. The first was the work of St. Basil of

Caesarea about A.D. 370. Miracle mongering, which even still exists, temporarily retarded progress; exorcism and amulets were thought by some to achieve cures. This work is not light reading and the translation is made with a heavy hand. Simplicity in language would have made for easier comprehension but it should be read and will be found valuable by those who are interested in medical lore.

The author is unable to give the answer as to what the future of psychosomatic medicine will be; he says that is the task of those who by practising and directing it will determine what its course is to be.

B. S.

OID RECALLED. By L. P. Wilkinson. Cambridge University Press. 37s. 6d.

The literary fate of Ovid has been a curious one: the poet who so enchanted Renaissance youth fell, save in the France of Molière and Racine, Poussin and Claude and in the England of the Restoration, speedily from grace; he has been for long severely handled by the critics, and his work is lightly dismissed by the modern reader as an over-long, smooth, elaborate façade.

Mr. Wilkinson traces the course of that fading reputation, the prejudices and changes of taste that found Ovid so easy a victim. Other sources of mythological lore were discovered by writers and artists; the novel was soon to surpass his psychological subtlety; men of letters showed more zest for Greek and, in any case, preferred Horace; the classics began to lose their prestige; puritanism averted its gaze from his eroticism; for the nineteenth century 'Ovid was typical of the *ancien régime*', and had no utilitarian justification at the universities; Romantic criticism of Dryden and Pope applied also to him. Yet, as Mr. Wilkinson asks, "Is it not possible that a poet who could say so much to Shakespeare, Milton and Goethe may still be able to say more than we have realized even to us?"

Ovid is not here returned to his former pedestal, though the reasons for that early delight in his verse, and for his influence on European art are persuasively presented; but the portrait of the man and poet and his background has been so skilfully restored that, in looking at that enigmatic, brilliant figure, witty, flawed, and at the uncommitted, lavish art, the poignant, unmasked poems of his exile, one is confronted, despite the opportunism and worse, with a great and dedicated poet.

The major works have been carefully analysed, and Mr. Wilkinson has translated the admirably chosen and lengthy extracts in heroic couplets. The form will have its critics, but he argues that it is the closest counterpart to the Ovidian elegiac. The Latinate reading public and non-specialist for whom *Ovid Recalled* is designed will find it a most distinguished and delightful study.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLATO'S ETHICS. By John Gould. Cambridge University Press. 25s.

Mr Gould begins his book by reminding us: "In reading the dialogues of Plato, we look back on a world whose differences from our own we may find it difficult to realize." How differently, for example, moral philosophy considers ethical problems to-day. "Plato, it will appear, is not subject to any basic doubt about the reliability of moral decisions, nor even, to put the matter more largely, about the existence of any valid and arguable 'aim' in human life. His

own most urgent efforts were directed towards the discovery of a viable method of *attaining* (in practice) an aim which, for him, is in some sense 'given'."

This study is, therefore, a patient and illuminating examination of what Plato accepted and questioned, what he understood by ethical problems, and how his treatment of them—and one, in particular—developed between the early dialogues and the disillusioned *Laws*.

" 'How is a man to achieve his true (moral) stature?' I cannot and do not claim that all that Plato has to say of ethical problems can be adequately considered under this head, but I am convinced that it remains his central concern"

Defining the Greek terms used, Mr. Gould traces Plato's differing answers to this question. Socrates' serene conviction that in the parallel he drew between the moral man and the artist or craftsman, and his subsequent arguments, he had shown the former how to find fulfilment is contrasted with Plato's hazardous, complex yet necessary attempt to include the community as well as individual man in his ethical theories. The student will find of particular interest Mr. Gould's discussion of the ambivalence that had its source in Plato's unwillingness fully to acquiesce "in human limitation and the reality principle".

"As we have observed Plato gradually accepting the reality principle as the dominating factor in his thinking about human conduct, the tension in his own mind has been growing; in the *Philebus* it has reached the surface, and become the keynote. In the *Laws*, perhaps, as we have seen, the reality principle is completely, if still reluctantly, accepted; but the flight from reality was there still evident, and the *Laws* is a work born of tiredness".

L. H.

A MATCH FOR THE DEVIL. By Norman Nicholson. Faber & Faber. 10s. 6d.

THE DEATH OF SATAN. By Ronald Duncan. Faber & Faber. 12s. 6d.

CARNIVAL KING. By Henry Treece. Faber & Faber. 12s. 6d.

Some years ago a French film was made out of a short story by Giono called *La Femme du Boulanger*. It was a tale of a cuckolded baker in a small village who refused to bake any more bread until his wife returned to him. Hosea, in Norman Nicholson's verse play, is also a baker of delicious bread: "He bakes as good as a king's concubine". Here we are in Jezreel where the prophet Amos thunders about Israel's betrayal of the Lord and where in the Temple young women are "in the service of holy harlotry". Hosea has married Gomer in all innocence of her dedication to the mysterious rites of the decadent tabernacle. Weary of the idle life which her husband insists she must lead, Gomer leaves him to return to her former occupation. His baking languishes but he finds the courage to beard the temple priests and retrieves his wife. The lovable *sancta simplicitas* of Hosea, a humour drawn from the unexpected use of Biblical phrases:

"Stay me with flagons,
He'll preach me bilious"

"Purge me with hyssop,
He's a madman"

placed against the pompous prophecies of Amos and a rich riot of vocabulary in which modernisms are rhythmically and happily bedded with the language of the Authorised Version make Mr. Nicholson's play a joy to read. It should be even better on the stage.

Ever since Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, the devil has had a good run on the stage but he has changed considerably since Elizabethan times. In Ronald Duncan's latest verse play he consorts with such known characters as Byron, Wilde and Shaw who play a rather futile eternal three-handed poker game in hell. Satan is perturbed that his permanent lodgers show no signs of the suffering expected of them for has he not designed the place for boredom :

" A waiting-room between one memory and another regret,

A reading-room where you read nothing but your misery ".

Only Don Juan appreciates the terror of the place and on that account he is permitted to return to earth for one year. On earth he discovers that man has lost his faith :

" He believes in nothing but himself

And doubts everything but his own reason ".

When this is reported to Satan, the latter realises that he has no longer any function and he decides to die. This satire on life, seen, as it were, from below, has wit and the kind of brilliance that makes up for a lack of real profundity.

Henry Treece, lucid champion of Apocalypse poetry of which school he was himself no inconsiderable practising member, might have been expected to use verse as his medium for what must be his first play : *Carnival King*. Since, however, the king of his title is Edward II on whom Marlowe had long ago wielded his mighty line, he may have decided that prose would exclude comparisons. Nevertheless, one would have liked to see so fine a contemporary poet using what is after all the higher form of artistic expression. History as a theme for the verse play is common property to be rifled for plot and character ; period and protagonist carry no patent and may be used again and again. Using a language that is neither aggressively contemporary or pointedly period, Mr. Treece develops the drama of the gay young king surrounded by enemies, his neglected wife and the favourite Gaveston whose relationship with Edward is intolerable to the queen and the courtiers. This is a powerful play in which the lyric gifts of the author are matched by his sense of theatre.

A. J. L.

THE FATE OF THE SOUL. An Interpretation of Some Primitive Concepts. By Raymond Firth. Cambridge University Press. 2s. 6d.

The Frazer Lecture, delivered in Cambridge in March, 1955, by Professor Raymond Firth considers some aspects of primitive eschatology. The main ideas of the Tikopia, an Oceanic community, are analysed in fascinating detail. A study of their formulation, of their correlates in social action, and of their development in a changing society—pagan and Christian—leads Professor Firth to argue that in many such eschatological systems more can be discovered than concern for the individual soul in the Hereafter. His very able demonstration that " the framework of ideas about the fate of the soul is in many respects a

framework of ideas about the state of society", and that implicitly or overtly contemporary human problems are involved, makes his lecture a lucid introduction to recent social anthropological research.

A FRENCHMAN EXAMINES HIS CONSCIENCE. By Jules Romains. Andre Deutsch. 12s. 6d.

Like several other distinguished Frenchmen, M. Jules Romains has felt impelled to write in severely critical terms about contemporary France. One would admire the courage that underlines for the outside world the sorry domestic and political situation were there less of self-righteous wrath in his attack. Indeed, the title of his book seems somewhat odd as the theme develops. Here is a conservative craving for the return of those traditionally happy days when peasants and the lower middle-classes were thrifty, the workers cleaner, more industrious, less clamorous and less greedy for luxuries, when the upper middle-classes had proper security and crude profiteers less opportunity. Irresponsibility, self-indulgence, lack of integrity are, however, scarcely class sins; and the remedies proposed—a return to the gold standard, reorganisation of the tax system, reformed (and, curbed) trade unions, the uninominal ballot—appear to have as their immediate end, at least, the redress of Right-wing grievances.

THE HOME-MENDERS. *The Prevention of Unhappiness in Children*. By Basil Henriques, C.B.E., M.A., J.P. London: George Harrap & Co., Ltd. 10s. 6d net.

How timely it is that there should be nearly a glut of books about children; there can not be too many. Ignorance in the treatment of children is obvious; cruelty to children is common and horrible. We reviewed in our last issue Dr. Housden's *Prevention of Cruelty to Children* and now we have a volume from Sir Basil Henriques who in his magisterial capacity during thirty years and from his forty-three years' experience in helping to run boys' clubs can speak with more authority of the difficulties in helping the lot of children than most people. Our first feeling, when we had finished reading *The Home-Menders* was to put it down and say "this is magnificent, too full of good things for a review, buy it and learn all the good things in it"; on second thoughts we decided we must say a little more. Improvement in the lot of unhappy children could be obtained through existing legislation but this is not enough and many valuable suggestions are made through the book. A well ordered home life is a necessity; many parents seem to lose interest in their children after they attain the age of 8 and allow them to roam too much on their own, and they remain children until at least the age of fourteen. Mothers go out to work too much and the children are neglected; these women like the pocket money and the gossip, and in many cases their husbands earn sufficient; obviously the home and the children will be neglected and there should be legislation to limit the working hours of mothers of children of school age; these mothers can not share in the lives of their children nor can they care for them when they get ill. The father, too, must share the responsibility of home building and the cane must be withheld. In England the appalling irresponsibility of illegitimate fathers is nearly criminal. Education of parents is necessary; schools for parents should be set up but it would be difficult to find competent teachers. There should be marriage councils and these unfortunately do not exist

in Eire. Attention is especially drawn to the excellence of Jewish home life and this accounts, according to the author and other authorities for the infinitesimal number of Jewish child delinquents. Girls are more difficult to cope with than boys and Henriques says he would rather deal with 20 boys than one girl. The cinema is blamed and rightly so for much trouble ; it is pointed out that fifty years ago, if people were seen embracing in the street, the passer-by would look the other way ; to-day the last word in flirtation is portrayed on the screen and this tends to moral lapses especially in girls. The two great wars and the advances in science have changed social conditions. Psychiatry has come into its own, but it is often difficult to determine whether a given case will be better dealt with by psychiatric means or by penology. Male and female street urchins are seldom seen in England for they have been replaced by spivs and spivettes. In Dublin the "gamin" still remains.

The author prefers public schools for boys only to coeducation ; we do not share in this opinion ; he approves of mixed clubs under certain conditions. Home builders, home menders, instruction in religion and sex are all necessary.

The children of the world will owe a debt of gratitude to Sir Basil Henriques if the public will only read his advice. This work should be in the home of parents of all classes of society. We will conclude with the following quotation :—
"The whole purpose of this book has been to show that good preventive family case work can save great mental and less frequently, physical suffering of men, women and children alike. If the book has concentrated the attention of ordinary men and women on how fragile is the structure of human relationships within the home, it will have partly served its purpose. If it has made any useful suggestions for detecting the symptoms of decay and for improving the preventive work of the State Machine of Social Welfare, it will indeed have been worth while writing it."

B. S.

BACKBLOCKS BABY-DOCTOR. An Autobiography by Doris Gordon, F.R.C.S. (Edin.), F.R.C.O.G., D.P.H. London : Faber and Faber, Ltd. 15s. net.

Following the example of the late Sir Truby King whose work for child welfare in New Zealand is internationally known, Dr. Doris Gordon has done at least as much good by her efforts to establish Maternity hospitals, child welfare centres and a valuable Obstetrical Society. She has recently received a well deserved Honorary Fellowship from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

Her early ambition was to become a medical missionary but instead she became a missionary for Obstetrics. About one third of the book is taken up with her family history, another third is devoted to the description of clinical cases and her efforts to improve the lot of the pregnant woman. She did much to introduce anaesthesia in labour into the country. She is a devotee of chloroform and has never seen a fatality ; in this she has been lucky for this drug has been given up for safer ones in many maternity hospitals. As she says "it's the man holding the bottle who may be wrong", and that is the point. Chloroform is insidious, dangerous and delightful ; it is nearly safe in the hands of the skilled and experienced worker but in many maternity hospitals there are occasions when juniors are the administrators and then the fatalities occur. On page 110 the old-fashioned word *saproemia* is used and should be omitted in future editions

and on page 112 "intrauterine cleansing was carried out"; this treatment is scarcely ever carried out. With regard to eclampsia the improvement in statistics through pre-natal care is noted. In spite of doing an enormous amount of wonderful professional work, Dr. Gordon has been able to have a happy family life with her doctor husband and her four children. There are far too many abnormal cases (many of them fatal) described; in a book for the layman this should not be done for these appear as horrors to the young married woman and to her husband. The Obstetrical Society will be a monument to her memory; apart from its other advantages it expunged the all too prevalent abortionists. The New Zealand mother of today can go to the hospital of her choice, knowing that her own doctor can attend her there and that she can have an anaesthetist and consultant if necessary; all of this at State expense. We do not intend to discuss Health Services but we are confident there is a place for the general practitioner in the service of Maternity Hospitals.

B. S.

THOUGHTS ON RIDING. By Brigadier Lyndon Bolton. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 20s. net.

In the spate of books on horses, which have been published during the last five years, this is truly a *coupe de maître*. It is not only full of information but is beautifully printed on good paper and the illustrations of which there are many are finely reproduced.

How the Brigadier loves horses! There is not only a foreword by the author who is a well-known instructor, a winner of point-to-points and a member of the British jumping team, but he also allows his horse to add a few words. The horse often tells us what he thinks, but we should try to understand him when he does so. It is pointed out that there must be a wise balance between the amount of food and exercise, because then the animal will have a healthy mind which is necessary; this dictum might also apply to man. The long sight of the horse is emphasised. We ourselves have noted a clever hunter spotting a "fox away" before any of the followers have done so. Age is no obstacle to riding or hunting. Mrs. Wall did not start riding until she was 40, and did clear rounds at the Dublin Show when she was 60. A man called Hartford rode point-to-points at 70. The horse has two qualities which are lacking in many human beings; he has generosity and courage. "No other creature is required to carry so great a weight at such a speed in such varying conditions." Among other instructive figures we enjoyed those showing how to open and close gates from a horse, and the take-off and landing after a jump.

"Thoughts on Riding" will be a precious gift for the man, woman and child who hunts, and is wonderful value.

B. S.

NEW CONCEPTS OF HEALING. Medical, Psychological and Religious. By A. Graham Ikin. Hodder and Stoughton, 12s. 6d.

Miss Ikin states in her preface: "*New Concepts of Healing* seeks to include some of the more recent insights of work on the part of psychologists and religious workers and to relate these to the work of the medical profession. There is need

for a framework within which the life of the Spirit is to be lived in this age and generation, with all God's ways of meeting man's needs co-ordinated, and it is hoped this book may be timely and helpful in enabling fellow workers with God to recognise His handiwork through others."

The subject of healing—and in particular spiritual healing—is one that troubles the Christian churches. The time-honoured excuses that the Church has replaced miracles and, when sacraments affect no outward change, that God moves in a mysterious way, or, more recently, that we are meant to avail ourselves of the resources of medicine, hardly answer the difficulties of people familiar with popularized psychological ideas and taught, in other contexts, that the Christian message must be accepted without reservation. There are, however, many who are "now taking the possibility of Christ's capacity to heal today and not just 2,000 years ago seriously, and trying to find the conditions that enable Him to break through the barriers of unbelief and the shackles of centuries of wrong thinking and living which hamper that fullness of life"; and they will welcome this book.

Miss Ikin examines in detail the problems that face the clergy, doctors and psychotherapists as well as the sick themselves, and instances attested cures that further encourage an integrated study of man, and deepen religious faith. Her survey, with its spiritual perception and considerable psychological knowledge, is balanced, honest and valuable.

DOCTOR'S WIFE IN GREENLAND. By Inga Ehrstrom. Translated from the Swedish by F. H. Lyon. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 15s. net.

Marriages where the husband and wife share dangerous adventures are becoming more and more common. There have been several such books on deep sea diving and here we have one written, alas, by the widow of a doctor. This pair took their two children into the wilds of Greenland where the husband was to conduct a scientific investigation into the appearance of certain diseases among the native population. The results of his work were that new light has been thrown upon a great number of connections between causes and illnesses and the object of the trip was fulfilled. The beauties of Greenland and its dangers are painted in glowing colours; the customs of the Eskimos are well portrayed and the humanitarian doctoring, apart from the research carried out by this brilliant Finnish physician, is succinctly described.

Greenland is a country without time but civilisation has brought to it the diseases of the West; about 36% of the population have tuberculosis. Superstition is rife and sex and hygienic habits are elementary. Adventures and amusing stories pervade the book. There is a lovely description of a couple aged 49 and 47 whose marriage had proved sterile. Mrs. Ehrstrom gave them a dressed doll and both parties evinced all the joys of parentage; the outcome of this present was a baby born within a year. Medical readers who wish to cure infertility, please note!

It is sad indeed that malignant disease carried off at an early age this scientist about whom his wife could say:—"After fourteen years of marriage, I could

calmly affirm that my husband was the best and finest human being I had met. His manifold interests, his sense of right and his love of all living creatures, his seriousness and humility in the face of the tasks he undertook, gave him a radiant charm which left none unaffected."

We enjoyed this well written saga with photographs showing various aspects of life in faraway Greenland.

B. S.

DIALOGUE ON DESTINY. By George W. Barrett and J. V. Langmead Casserley. Longmans. 4s.

In 1953, the rector of Trinity Church, New York City, who claims that it is there "an absolute necessity to present the Christian faith in as many compelling ways as the imagination of its leaders can conceive", invited Drs. Langmead Casserley and George W. Barrett to give a series of 'dialogue sermons'. They discussed, in the roles of Parish Priest and Enquiring Layman, such subjects as Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell.

In a joint preface to these sermons, slightly altered in form for publication, the two theologians stress the merits, given suitable conditions, of this method. Not everyone will be convinced that the church service is the most appropriate setting, or that an able preacher requires such assistance to treat of religious difficulties. The reader will find, however, that typical problems of the modern Christian are answered with honesty and clarity.

CARBONEL. By Barbara Sleigh. Illustrated by V. H. Drummond. Max Parrish. 8s. 6d.

LISTEN TO THE WIND. By Angela Ainley Jeans. Illustrated by Disley Jones. Max Parrish. 10s. 6d.

CATHERINE OF CORNERS. By Irene Byers. Max Parrish. 8s. 6d.

GLENVARA. By Mabel Esther Allan. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

Carbonel was, as a kitten, stolen by a witch. When she retired and decided to turn respectable, she sold him to the small daughter of a poor dressmaker for three farthings. He never forgets that he is a Royal Cat and, versed in magic, helps Rosemary and her friend John in their efforts to free him from the witch's spell so that he may be acclaimed as King of the Cats. There are many delightful adventures before they succeed; and young readers will find *Carbonel* a most vivid and enthralling story.

Listen to the Wind had considerable praise when produced as a play at the Oxford "Playhouse." As a book it falls into two parts: the first, describing the visit of two boisterous children to their prim little cousin who lives in Victorian luxury with her grandmother, is excellent; but the second, with its fantasy about Gale Birds and the Kingdom of the Winds, is obviously a theatrical entertainment, and will, perhaps, satisfy only the highly imaginative.

Catherine of Corners and *Glenvara* are designed for the older boy and girl. The former tells of a doctor's daughter who attempts to start a play centre in her slum neighbourhood. It is a moral tale brought up to date, and its suspense

and realistic episodes will be enjoyed. *Glenvara* is described as a "junior novel." Its heroine, about to leave school and unwilling to have the commercial training approved by her father, finds, while on holiday in Donegal, the sort of work and opportunities she desires. This is a conventional story that will please girls of similar age for whom more adult literature has no appeal.

DOCTOR IN THE WHIPS' ROOM. By Sir Henry Morris-Jones. London. Robert Hale Limited. 18s. net.

This is the autobiography of a general practitioner who combined practice with politics; whether this combination is of benefit to patients is a moot point. He was born in a Welsh village without a public house; we do not believe there is a village in Ireland without this amenity. Not only was he a Member of Parliament for 21 years but he was a Government Whip. His globe trotting experiences as well as his war services are well described. Reiteration of modern history is a dominant note but there is not a great deal which has not been said before. He speaks of Oswald Mosely in a eulogistic manner without mentioning his loyalty to Hitler and his poisonous anti-semitic propaganda. We would question his prophecy about King Farouk who, he says, has "unquestionable ability and of all the sovereigns in exile I should back him first among those ever likely again to resume his throne". The author did some noble work as a delegate to Buckenfeld.

The last chapter is the best in the book; we agree entirely on his philosophy about retirement. He evidently has a real love for dogs, birds, and flowers and he becomes nearly poetic about them. The points whether length of days depends on the food we eat and whether alcohol and tobacco shorten life are argued. Mention is made of a lady of 102 who enjoyed her pipe for 50 years and of a farmer of 92 who commenced his breakfast with a pint of beer and a clay pipe full of tobacco. There are numerous photographs, most of them of the author at various functions.

The names of celebrities crop up continually and the Index is useful.

B. S.

BAILY'S HUNTING DIRECTORY, 1955-1956, with Diary and Hunting Maps. Fiftieth year. London. Vinton & Co. 25s. net.

If we wish to find out how to spell a word, we consult the Oxford Dictionary; if we wish to discover anything about Hunting we consult Baily's Hunting Directory, for as we said in our review of last year's issue it is absolutely comprehensive. This is the jubilee number of what has been called "The Hunting Man's Red-Backed Bible of the Chase", and to commemorate this, reprints of several articles which appeared in 1897 are published here. They are (1) Kennel management, (2) Hunting equipment in 1897-98, (3) Fox coverts. Very little change has occurred during the intervening years. There is a very small omission in the overwhelming volume of information; the Drag Hunts of Ireland are not mentioned.

Those who wish to be *au fait* with hunting affairs must have this work on their book shelves.

B. S.

THE SUBURBAN CHILD. By James Kenward. Illustrated by Edward Ardizzone. Cambridge University Press. 12s. 6d.

HARRY BELL. Being Part One of A Family History. By Brian Stuart. Richard Bell. 14s.

Mr. Kenward has written a most agreeable book on a subject which the fashionable world would not so long ago have regarded with disdain.

"Suburbia is, or was, a state, I say 'was' because the state of Suburbia is passing away. Its great days are already over.

"In time I hope it will be given the history it deserves, complete with footnotes and maps and an acknowledgment of the civilizing influence it has had upon the larger world, written by some eminent historian. Meanwhile I offer this incomplete memorial volume."

His defence is not of what 'suburban' implies when used in a derogatory sense, but of its inhabitants' comfortable pleasures. A modern Elia, he recalls its mild glory with every felicity of phrase and fancy, and a delicate embellishment of nostalgia. Whether he is gravely recording for the future historian the changes in three generations of suburban life, or enticing the museum curator with an account of the costumes and toys that will forever be associated with the first bicycles and motor-cars, he is conscious of the adventures and sensations of one small boy. His suburbia may be invested with innocent rapture; but as an account of childhood, Mr. Kenward's book has unusual sensitivity and grace, and is delightfully illustrated.

Mr. Stuart has also written about the past—a piece of family history in the form of a period novel. His grandfather, Harry Bell of Belmont, a handsome young man and heir to large estates and a considerable fortune, suddenly and inexplicably renounced them and his family in 1849 and enlisted as a private. Only one man, Lord Magherafelt, knew the reason; and his many distinguished relatives finding their surmises unfounded, were left to grief, bewilderment or anger. Bell became a sergeant in the Crimean War and served through the Indian Mutiny; and ended his life as an invoice-clerk with a firm of brewers in London in 1878, leaving his devoted wife and children in distressed circumstances. There are hints that if a certain 'miracle' had occurred in the West Indies he would have returned to his home in Ireland; but Mr. Stuart has decided to leave the solution of the mystery to a future volume. This has the disadvantage that the reader is unable to decide whether Harry Bell was a quixotic, chivalrous figure, or tiresomely self-willed and humourless. The nobility in which we are required to believe is certainly a little wooden.

THERE WAS AN ANCIENT HOUSE. By Benedict Kiely. Methuen. 12s. 6d.

There was an auncient house not far away,
Renowned throughout the world for sacred lore,
And pure unspotted life. . . .

Spenser's lines are the background to this story about the novices of a religious order in an Irish country house, and especially the ingenuous, imaginative MacKenna, the sophisticated Barragry, former journalist and barrister, and their

relations with the wise old Master of Novices. Barragry recovers from distaste for the world and returns to the woman he loves ; MacKenna returns also, but to enter a hospital for spinal treatment, taking with him the vows that he reverences. Mr. Kiely uses the 'stream of consciousness' technique to reveal the temptations and development of his characters ; but he portrays life in the order with as much concern for surface as for atmosphere. The least interesting part of *There was an Ancient House* is the love-affair ; the rest is treated with a lively sympathy and candour that suggest personal experience. This is certainly his best novel.

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD. By Thomas Gray. Illustrated by John O'Connor. Miniature Books. The Rodale Press. 5s.

This latest volume in the Miniature Series is a charming production, and the introduction by Mr. Irwin Feder completely appropriate. In it he praises the poem for "the elegance of its style, the harmony of its verse, the beauty and correctness of the diction", and describes Gray as : "In short, a rather studious, sober, and sedentary man. A little melancholy, but by no means morose ; reclusive-like, perhaps, but never misanthropic".

BED OF NAILS. The Story of the Amazing Blondini. Presented by Gordon Thomas. London : Allan Wingate. 15s. net.

We felt bored at the idea of reading about Blondini and we opened the book with boredom in our minds but when we started we could not put it down. It is a story of adventure well told by Gordon Thomas. Mike Blondini is of Irish parentage born in the atmosphere of the fair ground. His mother was a fortune teller ; his father was a pocket Hercules who informed him when he reached the age of thirteen that he must choose a profession and he became a sword swallower ; in addition he ate fire, motor cars ran over him and finally he decided to become a human cannon ball. At one time he was nearly starving and worked as a busker on the streets. He had two romances and sensitiveness seems to be a prime factor in his make-up. Instructions are given with illustrations as to how to swallow swords and to do other tricks but we are not eager to try them. The life of the fair ground with its bravery, cleverness and its trickery is well described.

The photograph of Blondini shows him as a slightly sad little man but he says "Today I can still see the funny side of things and while I can do this I'll still make a living in show business." We should dearly like to meet him.

B. S.

WINIFRED HOLTBY. A Concise and Selected Bibliography together with Some Letters. Compiled and Edited by Geoffrey Handley-Taylor. With a Foreword by Vera Brittain. £1 1s.

To commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the death of the Yorkshire novelist, Mr. Handley-Taylor has compiled this bibliography, the proceeds of which will be devoted to The Winifred Holtby Memorial Fund. Several photographs are included, and some childhood letters to her favourite governess. The

book will be welcomed by students of modern literature for, as Dr. Vera Brittain states in her foreword, Winifred Holtby, who, till her death in 1935, was generally regarded as a minor if agreeable writer and competent journalist, was to have her status transformed overnight by the publication of the posthumous *South Riding*, "and with the years that status has steadily grown."

JUST A LITTLE BIT OF STRING. By Ellaline Terriss. With a foreword by Beverley Nichols. London: Hutchinson. 21s. net.

Enormous sums are being paid for thoroughbred foals whose breeding is well known. Ellaline Terriss whose father the actor, was unfortunately assassinated by a madman may truly be called a thoroughbred actress. If one studies the "form" of some of our famous actors today, many of them will be found to be bred from the best acting stock. Unfortunately several of the outstanding personalities of the modern stage have no progeny.

Joie-de-vivre pervades the pages of this book and if one is in the "dumps", let him journey with the beautiful Ellaline in her varied career. And she was and is beautiful and few actresses have played in so many different kinds of role; she was equally satisfactory in musical comedy, farce, straight comedy, music hall, melodrama and the movies. We heard her at 83 years of age when she emerged temporarily from her retirement to speak and even to sing on the wireless. Unlike some married acting couples, her husband Seymour Hicks was at least as talented as his wife and like her was equally at home in most types of acting. Besides which he was an actor manager and author of plays. During their happy married life they started the vogue of bringing troupes of actors to the fighting zone to entertain the soldiers during the first world war and for this and for other reasons they became Sir Seymour and Lady Hicks. The title of the book is taken from what might be called her signature tune

"Just a little bit of string
What a tiny little thing."

A foreword should often be passed over for it is sometimes just a recommendation full of compliments, but Beverley Nichols' contribution should not be missed. As a child, Ellaline met Henry Irving and Ellen Terry and later acted with them. The names of most of the famous actors and actresses of the time crop up and we are reminded of a somewhat similar book which we recommended in these columns *Sixty Years of the Theatre* by Shortt.

A list of the plays in which she appeared is given and her first pronounced success was in the part of Cinderella. "If you must lose your temper don't do it in public." These were the words of the impressario Charles Frohman but to look at the pictures of Lady Hicks we can not imagine her ever losing her's.

There was not so much competition in the early and middle days of her life, for wireless, television, greyhounds and picture houses had not arrived.

"My own recipe for happiness is to put your trust in God, never to indulge in self-pity but keep your memories of the past and live and laugh in the present." What a true and wise philosophy is this!

Photographs are numerous and are well produced, and a comprehensive Index is appended.

B. S.

PERIODICALS

ÉTUDES ANGLAISES. Juillet-Septembre, 1955. Didier, Paris. 400 fr.

This number of *Études Anglaises* opens with a study by M. Pierre Lefranc entitled 'Un Inédit de Raleigh sur la Conduite de la Guerre (1596-1597)'. It is a scholarly and fascinating account of a manuscript, here published, in the British Museum, and which, he states, "à ma connaissance, n'a jamais été étudié, ni authentifié, ni publié". Mr. K. J. Fielding considers the possible authenticity of the letter purporting to have been written by Mrs. Dickens's aunt after Charles Dickens had insisted on a legal separation, and which, up to the present biographers have been reluctant to accept as genuine. There are also studies of Thomas Paine's 'Letter to the Abbé Raynal' and of Milton's prose, and many excellent reviews.

BOOKS ABROAD. An International Literary Quarterly. Summer, 1955. University of Oklahoma Press. One Dollar and Twenty-five Cents.

The Summer issue of *Books Abroad* is largely devoted to Commonwealth literature, and the general reader will find much of interest in the essays on contemporary writers in South Africa, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. In addition there is the usual valuable survey of foreign books.

IMAGI. 1955. Cole, Baltimore. Fifty Cents.

Imagi, appearing at intervals, concerns itself with the previously unpublished work of established poets, and the work of new poets. The present contributions are American and have been chosen with discrimination.

TRACE. Villiers Publications. April, 1955. 1s. August, 1955. 1s. 6d. October, 1955. 2s.

The April and August numbers of this directory of the small literary magazines include an interesting survey by Mr. Lawrence Lipton of recent poetry and drama. The October number gives detailed information about the smaller presses, chiefly in America, and Mr. F. Cogswell writes on magazine outlets for poetry in Canada.

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